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TIGRANES:

A Tale of the Days of

JULIAN THE APOSTATE.

ABRIDGED FROM THE ITALIAN OF

FATHER JOHN JOSEPH FRANCO, S. J.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

It is a common saying, but as true as it is trite, that history is continually repeating itself; and if there is any department of history in which this truth absolutely forces itself upon our minds, it is certainly the record of the successive wars waged by the world against the kingdom of Christ. And it is no wonder that it is so; for whatever may be the particular causes or circumstances which give the peculiar tone and coloring to each local or general revolt against the authority of God and of His Church, the spirit which animates them all is ever the same. The same old enemy always shows himself at last, in spite of all disguises. It is still the old conflict between good and evil, between obedience and lawlessness, between the Church and the world, between God and Satan. So the bitter persecution which is now weighing upon the Church, has its prototype in the past. Those who have followed up its workings and studied its spirit, will easily recognize in the treacherous, hypocritical, and truculent persecutions of the Fourth Century, the model which has been so faithfully copied in our own day.

Father Franco has admirably brought out this parallelism in his TIGRANATE,* a work equally remarkable for deep and accurate historical research, for intimate acquaintance with the spirit and manners of the times which it represents, and for well-sustained interest as a narrative. This is in no sense a work of fiction; the characters and incidents are strictly historical. Among other authorities, it will be sufficient to quote Ammianus Marcellinus, Zosimus, Theodoret, St. Gregory Nazianzen, and the writings of Julian himself, besides the works of the many historical and literary celebrities mentioned in the course of the story.

The book which is now offered to English readers is not a complete translation, but an abridgment, which appeared originally, as a serial, in the MESSENGER OF THE SACRED HEART. It is believed, however, that a sufficient continuity and fulness of plot has been preserved to keep up the interest of the narrative and to carry out the leading purpose of the author.

At the time of our narrative, the Church had just come forth from her baptism of blood. During three centuries of cruel persecution, all the strength of a world-ruling empire, powerful by its victories, by the splendor of a civilization which had reached its zenith in the Augustan age, by the glories of poetry, eloquence and the arts, had been spent upon the new-born Church; the purple of the

* Tigranate. Racconto Storico dei tempi di Giuliano Apostata. Del P. Gio. Giuseppe Franco, D. C. D. G. Rome, 1867.

Cæsars was dyed with the blood of those countless heroes of the faith whose names adorn her glorious martyr-roll. But she had come forth from the struggle with all the strength, freshness, and vigor of unfailing life—a life which the world can never destroy, because the Church is the Body of Christ, and Christ is God.

Constantine had crushed the power of the last Pagan emperor, in that great battle on the banks of the Tiber, which has been called the Actium of Christianity; and the Religion of Christ, ascending the imperial throne with the first Christian Emperor, had set the cross on the Cæsar's crown. But though the era of blood seemed to have ended, yet the Church was not to enjoy repose. Her Divine Founder had left her, as an everlasting legacy, the perfect imitation of His own life, which was one long martyrdom, from the rejection, the neglect, and sufferings of the stable of Bethlehem, to the derision, the blasphemies, and the ignominious Cross of Calvary.

Under the immediate successors of Constantine, the Church was harassed by a new system of veiled and perfidious persecutions, which have a striking counterpart in those that are now afflicting the successor of Liberius, at the hands of the imitators of Constantius and Julian the Apostate. Constantius, the second master of the Lower Empire, was a man of weak and undecided character, wholly possessed by an overweening self-conceit and a strange mania for mixing in theo-

logical discussions and giving the law to the Councils of the Church. The corrupt ministers and Arian bishops, who ruled his court, humored this weakness, and thus easily made of him a pliant tool to work their will against the orthodox clergy and the faithful Catholics; and the Church, which had nothing to dread in an open war with paganism, had everything to fear when given up to the whims and the artifices of a corrupt court and a crowned theologian. Hollow professions of friendly regard and filial submission were lavished upon the Roman Pontiff whilst the snares were being laid in which he was to be entrapped; the decrees of Constantius's Councils were sent to Rome for the approval of the Pope, whose action was contemptuously disregarded whenever it did not fall in with the Emperor's views; the Catholic bishops were met with hypocritical smiles and feigned reverence, when the edicts of their banishment had been already signed by the very hand which was held out to them in cordial greeting. "Impious Prince," wrote the fearless Hilary of Poitiers, "you receive the bishops with a kiss, like that with which Judas betrayed Christ; whilst you bow your head to receive their blessing, your foot is raised to trample on their faith!" Not even the sacred person of the Sovereign Pontiff was safe from the tyrant's fury; Liberius was sent into exile after an interview at Milan, in which the passionate invectives and overbearing tyranny of the Emperor, on the one hand, and the firm and dignified reserve of the

Pontiff on the other, vividly recall another meeting between a Pope and an Emperor, at Fontainebleau, at a later day. The Catholic bishops were not always able to escape the well-laid snares prepared for them; and imperial flattery and court dignities, backed by Byzantine gold, seduced many whom violent measures would but have strengthened in their faith. To this time may be applied the words of a recent Catholic writer, concerning a later period:—"When the shepherds of the flock, the guardians of the public morals, had themselves turned aside into unhealthy pastures, what would become of the people whom they led? As the roots of faith began to decay, and lost their hold on the hearts of the people, Christian life began to wither away; morality became corrupt." The seeds of new heresies, carefully fostered by imperial patronage and doctrinal dissensions, sprang up in all parts of the empire, which thus became ripe for the revolts, the fresh persecutions, and the temporary restoration of paganism, which desolated the vineyard of the Lord during the succeeding reign. After a life spent in holding councils without the sanction of the Holy See, in falsifying the decrees of those which had been legitimately convoked, in banishing the lawful pastors of the Catholic flock, and in strengthening the position of the Arian heresy, Constantius left the Roman purple to his nephew, Julian, whom he had called to share it with him soon after the beginning of his reign.

The character of Julian and of his persecution are thus given by a recent Church historian: "Julian was much too keen-sighted and crafty, and too well acquainted with the history of the Church he hated, to renew the open persecutions in which his predecessors, from Nero to Diocletian, had met with such signal failure. Ridicule, public contempt, derision and satire, were the chief weapons he deemed of avail against a Church which torrents of blood had not overwhelmed. The weapon of sarcasm was shivered in the hands of Julian; and the philosophers of the eighteenth century, who so carefully gathered up the scattered fragments, have met with the same success as the Apostate. They fondly imagined themselves the inventors of a new system; and their invention is reduced to a pitiful plagiarism from a persecuting master of the Lower Empire."

Julian was bent on restoring the worship of the gods of Homer and Virgil; and the state of Roman society, at the death of Constantius, was certainly such as to give strong grounds for his sanguine hopes. He labored to foment divisions between the Catholics and the Arians, to weaken them by means of each other, and then to crush both under the weight of public contempt. As a necessary part of his plans for throwing the faithful off their guard and deluding them into a belief in the sincerity of his professions of toleration and forbearance, he never appeared himself in the odious character of a persecutor, but encouraged the pagans to harass

the Christians in every way. His specious edict granting universal freedom of religious worship, did for a time lull the fears and suspicions of many, but they were soon startled out of their fancied security, and learned that the boasted toleration was meant for the worshippers of idols, and that if no public edict condemned them to death, the Christians were no less surely marked out for secret and indirect persecution and ultimate destruction. The heathens were loaded with favors and held all the offices at court; the Christians received but disdain, vexation and disgrace. The clergy were gradually deprived of all their rights and privileges, and even of the necessary means of support; the churches were stripped of their costly furniture, that the temples of the idols might be suitably adorned; the weak were seduced by promises of wealth and honors; apostasy was the avenue to every preferment, a cloak for every crime.

But Julian understood that all his well-laid plans would fail, so long as the youth of the Empire was taught by Christian teachers. By an imperial edict Christian professors were forbidden to teach in public or in private, and thus Christian parents could no longer send their children to the schools of literature. The Apostate had evidently left nothing undone that a truly Satanic hate could suggest for the uprooting of Christianity; and every act of conscientious resistance to these unjust laws, every profession of fidelity to God and religion, was made a State offence.

But, as the fierce assaults of the Pagan persecutors, so the insidious attacks of the heretic and the apostate are powerless against the Church which God has set up in the world to rule and to teach.

A mere outline of the policy adopted in our own days, as most available against the Church, will suffice to show its great likeness to that which has been sketched above. The failure of the bloody work which followed the great religious revolt of the sixteenth century, taught the more astute legislators of a later day the same lesson which the tyrants of the Lower Empire had learned before. What are the weapons now used in the war of extermination which the powers of hell have undertaken against the Church of God? They have tried to do their work in the dark; and accordingly the duty of organizing and marshalling the forces has been entrusted to the secret societies, whose ready tools are the sovereigns and the leaders of public opinion who now sway the destinies of the world. An impious and heretical press has been instituted to poison the public mind with false principles, to misrepresent the teaching and practice of the Church, and to glorify the supremacy of the *State*, an impersonal, ephemeral being, which may be the Czar to-day, the Commune to-morrow, a puppet-king or an unscrupulous minister, a military usurper or a venal congress.

A materialistic and irreligious education is en-

forced, to sow the seeds of false doctrine, and to destroy all belief in everything spiritual in heaven or on earth. The poison of liberalism has weakened the vigor of men's characters, and left in many souls the blighting indifferentism and lukewarmness destructive of all faith and honesty. The old policy of Julian is copied to the letter. Catholics are to be made to forget their history; they are to be dazzled by the boasted freedom and liberality of this century of independent thought and religious liberty. There is to be no more distinction of Catholic and Protestant, Jew or Infidel; no more persecution for conscience' sake. "The rack, the gibbet, the fagot, and the hurdle are all to be banished out of sight and forgotten, the narrow lines of prejudice softened down." Meanwhile the Catholic press is gagged; the churches and religious orders are stripped of their property for the benefit of heretics and apostates; the legislators of the nations make and enforce oppressive laws which contradict the fundamental principles of their State Constitutions, and in virtue of which the bishops and priests who deem it just to obey God rather than man, are subjected to crushing fines and driven from their sees, or languish in dungeons; the Sovereign Pontiff himself is a prisoner in his own palace; and all this amid the cold silence and stolid indifference of a venal press which sets itself up as the vindicator of human rights, but which Father Faber well characterized as "a powerful, tyrannical, and tri-

umphant scoundrelism." And if the Church raises its voice to utter the warning cry that Liberalism is false, the same unprincipled press is ever ready to thunder out its indignant protest against this renewal of mediæval despotism, and drown or distort the utterances of Christ's Vicar if it cannot disprove them.

Another delusion of the day is the high sounding principle: "A free Church in a free State;" "A pernicious delusion," says the illustrious Archbishop of Westminster, "which has blinded and seduced many better minds, resting on the false assumption that the two societies are perfectly free and independent one of another, which is absolutely true of the Church, but absolutely false of the State." Truly interpreted, in the light of its recent applications, it means that "the State should take from the Church all its means of subsistence, and retain absolute control over it; and what is calmly described as 'merely attempting to set bounds to ecclesiastical power,' has been shown in its true character by acts so senseless, that neither Domitian nor Julian ever dreamed of attempting them."

But to inform the public mind with such principles, it must first have been fitly prepared; the shallow pretensions and perpetual contradictions offered to the readers of this generation could not easily dislodge sound principles, or mislead a logical thinker. Besides, they require the perversion of the heart, as well as of the intellect; and this

ground too must have been made ready. The weeds of human error are of slow growth in a well cultivated garden. Accordingly the education of youth must pass into the hands of the State. "We will force your children to go to our schools and receive the education we give them, which you call godless," says a leading scientific liberal in England, a faithful interpreter of the spirit of modern liberal legislation; and a leading English liberal journal tells us what sort of education our youth may expect from the State Universities: "All hinderance to the teaching of infidelity has been taken away, and that is the great danger of the future." The Church has consistently taken a firm stand against this system of one-sided, misdirected education, which can do nothing but serious harm to the youth of our public schools. She knows that alone, education cannot stand; without religion it must inevitably lead to atheism or fanaticism, to materialism or to utter infidelity. "Education without religion," says a writer in the *Catholic World*, "is as treacherous and frail a support to civilization as the reed that pierces the hand of him who leans upon it." The result of modern *liberal* legislation has been to deprive the nations of the only influence which could direct, purify, and elevate their legislative action, and save it from the disastrous backward step it has taken towards anarchy and paganism.

If we look about us, to-day, upon the state of the world, such as *modern ideas* have made it, we

see the result of three centuries of revolt against the Church. Men have shut their eyes against the only light in which the natural and the divine blend into harmony; they have violently divorced the temporal and the spiritual; wrested from the Vicar of Christ his lawful possessions, and rejected his authority in matters of the highest importance to the welfare of nations. The morality of the Gospel is ignored, and the abomination of desolation triumphs in the Holy City. But in the midst of this antichristian revolution which is bearing away all the old landmarks of Christian civilization and threatening to engulf the world in utter ruin, the children of the Church have nothing to fear. They have seen generation after generation rushing blindly on to defeat and destruction, forgetful of the might which has withered every hand and blasted every power that ever moved against the kingdom of God. Through the gloom and desolation that have covered the earth, like a pall, they see the majestic form of the imperishable Church, rising calm and fearless above the storm; they hear the cheering voice of him who sways Christ's spiritual sceptre in the Eternal City: "Fear not; stand and see the great wonders of the Lord, which he will do this day." They know that the kingdom of Christ has outlived fiercer storms and triumphed over stronger foes; that no earthly power can check its divine growth, no persecution, however deadly, stay its conquering march or mar its heavenly beauty. Patient and prayerful, they

leave to Providence the times, and the seasons, and the manner of the triumph, confident that this long night of suffering and sorrow will only serve to make the dawn of peace and victory more bright and glorious. The rock on which Christ founded His Church will crush and break in pieces every power that hurls itself against it, and itself shall stand forever.

Since the historical parallelism has been so perfect until now, it is not impossible that it may continue to the end. Let the Prussian and Italian Julians of to-day remember that their model and master died upon a Persian battle-field, amid defeat and humiliation, crying with impotent rage and despair: THOU HAST CONQUERED, GALILEAN!

TIGRANES.

HISTORICAL SCENES AND SKETCHES OF THE FOURTH CENTURY OF THE CHURCH.

I.

THE SCHOOL AT ATHENS.

ATHENS was styled the eye of the world. Reclining luxuriously upon a gentle slope clothed in a perennial robe of green, where ever freshly bloomed the olive, the vitex and the laurel, she seemed to rest her head upon the proud Acropolis, fanned by the cool breezes, while the sea rolled in through three great gates to kiss her feet with its silvery waves. It is true indeed that no longer was the heavy beat of the hammer heard in the Phalerean arsenals, fashioning the swords and breastplates for Attic legions; nor were the dockyards of Munichian Minerva busy making ready the triremes which should carry terror into all Asia, to Egypt and Sicily; but she was seemingly satisfied to rest idly upon her ancient renown, the accumulated spoils

of victory, and the never-waning celebrity of her schools of learning. The hills around, smiling in the green gladness of their vineyards, were dotted with rustic cottages and villas, connected by broad avenues of plane-trees, revealing through their beautiful vistas a vast garden, which looked as if it had been created to protect in its friendly silence the venerated sanctuary of Grecian wisdom. And though the fragments were rolling down from the time-eaten walls, once rebuilt by Conon, into the groves of fig-trees below, yet the graceful statues still stood unmoved upon their wonderful caryatides; so did the shrine raised by Theseus to the memory of the dead of Marathon, and the dipteral temple to Olympian Jove, whose magnificent proportions spanned sixty pairs of stately columns, the noblest temple to the king of gods and of men that stood in all Greece; and there was the temple of Victory, with the grand works of art reared by Pericles upon the hill fortified by Cecrops; and above all in renown towered the Parthenon, the supreme effort of Grecian art, a lasting challenge and source of envy to all future ages.

In the Pnyx, that political forum, second only to the Roman forum, flanked on all sides by palaces and temples, still remained the seats of the Archons, cut out of the live rock, and the rostra—if the expression may be allowed in this application—of Demosthenes, from which famous orators, not less fluent, if less eloquent, than those of old, held forth on topics of municipal interest.

Nor were the great theatres silent. The spectators crowded one another there, sometimes to glut their savage thirst for blood by the slaughter of wild beasts,—a new kind of rage borrowed from the Roman people,—sometimes to applaud the readings of the Sophists, or the verses of the poets, a pleasure inherited from the ancient auditors of Herodotus and Sophocles.

This was the peerless glory of Athens—her supremacy in the fine-arts and the recognition, as of old, of her sovereign sway in philosophy and eloquence. And so the Academy and the Lyceum of Xenocrates and Plato were daily thronged by the youth, gathered thither from the whole Roman world, whilst the Porch resounded with philosophical discussions as in the days of Zeno. Philosophers abounded; some in the philosopher's cloak of the severe Aristotelian cut, others with long, unkempt beards after the fashion of the Cynics, and others still with the affected look of inspiration peculiar to the Neoplatonists, and all going their several ways, surrounded by parties of their followers, to the lecture-halls, where their lectures were heard and applauded by their numerous disciples, all standing in reverent silence while the master spoke.

In this home of all learning the lectures on Rhetoric were the most numerously attended, for the school could then boast of the eloquence of the great champion of decaying paganism, the Sophist Libanius, who had lately come thither from Con-

stantinople. But even more renowned than he, and justly so, was Proeresius, a fervent Christian, who had in his old age received, from the descendants of Cicero, a statue bearing the inscription: "Rome, the queen of the world, to the prince of eloquence."

At the period which opens our narrative, among the many students who had flocked to Athens to drink at its seemingly exhaustless fount of learning, one was particularly noticeable. Young, learned, a ready talker, generous in his friendship, he was courted by the Sophists, and, though a mere scholar, was attended like some divinity. This was Julian, grand-nephew of Constantine, and the legitimate heir to the first throne in the world. In fact, Constantius, his uncle, called him to Milan, not indeed through any sympathy, but at the instigation of the Empress Eusebia, to adopt him as sharer of the imperial purple. Among the friends and confidants whom Julian selected to accompany him to Italy, was a youth named Flavius Tigranes, who had come from Antioch but two months before to pursue his studies in Athens.

Before setting out with them for Milan, we cannot forbear asking the reader to linger a moment to take a parting glance at the famous Athenian school, which had many points of resemblance to the Universities that have succeeded it, even down to our own day. What irresistibly holds our attention at the first glance, is the strange mingling of so many diverse elements in the vast throngs that

formed the myriad student-population. Here were youths from neighboring states and from remote shores, bringing with them every variety of disposition and temperament and even of dress, most of them intent upon dissipation and luxury of life far more than upon study; there were many unbelievers among them, some were idolaters, not a few were Christians. Among the latter were two whose names and history are too glorious and important in the Church's annals to be dismissed without more than a passing notice. One of them was Basil, a native of Cappadocia, though of an Armenian family; wealthy and of noble birth, a tall and graceful figure, with a manly countenance browned under an Eastern sky, marked his exterior, while the ardent spirit within spoke through the piercing eye, which most frequently seemed to temper its fire in the longing glances fixed upon heaven, as of one who has higher aspirations than earth can satisfy. He seemed to be about twenty-six years of age, and the junior of his friend Gregory of Nazianzum. Gregory was of middle stature, of light complexion, in manner, affable and courteous to a degree which might have suggested an over-refined nicety but for the straight and bushy eyebrows,which gave a serious and manly shade to his countenance. The two friends shared the same lodgings, which they made the home of retirement, piety and learning, and of the most noble and divine friendship recorded in the annals of Christian charity.

Gregory had already been attending the schools for some years. The incomparable genius of the young student won the homage even of his teachers, who seemed to look upon him rather as a fellow-worker than as a pupil. He had heard of the reputation of Basil, who had also won high distinction in the schools of Asia, and was now coming to give the last polish to his education in the great University of Athens. At their first meeting, these two great souls understood each other and rushed together by a mutual attraction, and the bonds of that beautiful friendship, linked together by the Divine Hand, were never after broken.

There was a custom prevalent among the Athenian students of that early period, which has not yet wholly gone out of fashion with the University youth, and which consisted in a species of *hazing*. Each new-comer in turn had to undergo the ordeal of some very rude and boisterous treatment, even through the public streets of the city, until the party chose to break up at the public baths.*

Gregory determined to save his friend from this annoying ceremony of inauguration. He represented to his fellow-students that Basil was no

* On the first appearance of a new-comer, he is led in solemn procession through the forum to the baths. The ceremony is somewhat in this wise; those who are appointed file off by twos before him, and on reaching the baths, close their mock solemnity by yelling and leaping about him as though they had all gone stark mad, etc. S. Greg. Nanz. *Or.* 43, *Basilii Laudes*, n. 16, opp. t. III, p. 516.

longer a wild young man like themselves, but a learned pilgrim, who was coming to test their professors of science, and that if they would but wait a few days they might satisfy themselves, by hearing his discourses and disputations that he was no mere student. By such arguments, and still more by his personal influence, he obtained from his companions that Basil should, though contrary to immemorial usage, be dispensed from the annoyance of such a reception. Of course Basil was proportionably grateful to him for this favor, which did but increase tenfold their mutual confidence. Side by side, they heard the same professors, save only when Basil devoted some additional hours to the profane sciences of Geometry, Physics and Astronomy, whilst Gregory gave his attention to Belles-lettres and Sacred Literature; and their fame was one, so that throughout all the East the Athenian schools were never mentioned without some allusion to the two friends, reverenced by the Christians, and respected by even the misbelievers. Never in life was that sacred tie broken which had been knit by the Holy Ghost; but when at last it was snapped asunder by death, Gregory remembered, at the tomb of his departed friend, the happy days at Athens, and paid them the tribute of warm tears of affection.

Gregory, now a prelate of the Church, and venerable by age, spoke to the Christian people who had gathered around the remains of their bishop: "We were together at Athens in

early youth, both eager in the pursuit of what most awakens jealousy—of science. And yet no thought of envy ever came near to us, we were fired only by an honorable emulation. There was but one kind of dispute, which often arose between us, a strife to procure each for the other some new honor, for each esteemed the other's glory his own.

"The same ardor fired both our hearts in the pursuit of one object; for together we looked upward to a heavenly goal, and strove by a common effort to wrest our hearts from the hold of earthly ties, before death should break those bonds asunder. The Sacred Volume was our guide and guardian, and mutual example the incentive to keep its law; and—may I not be allowed without suspicion of pride to say it?—each one looked to the other for the standard and rule of his own actions. Our society was made up, not of the immoral and corrupt, but of the most orderly; not of the riotous and debauched, but of the retiring and modest; for we well knew that it is far easier to catch the infection bred by the wicked or the weak, than to impart moral healthfulness to others. We knew two streets, and no more; the one we trod on a noble mission, though the other was honorable too. The former led to the sacred precincts of the house of God and to the priests, the latter to the schools and to our masters. The other streets, thronged by the seekers after pleasure, sports, debauchery and crime, we had left

altogether to those who loved such things. Whilst others boasted loudly of the glory of country, of ancestry, or of deeds of personal prowess, it was our greatest glory to be known as Christians. And so, Athens, which has ever been for the great majority of the young a sink of corruption and spiritual death, for us, protected as we were by the strong safeguard of our mutual friendship, was not only harmless, but even afforded us occasions of advancing and strengthening ourselves in virtue."

Julian would have given much to share the friendship of his incomparable fellow-students; but he felt too strongly the wide difference of character which forbade any association with these youths who knew him better than he would have wished. He had indeed been brought up a Christian, but for the past six years he had lived in a state of impious, though secret, apostasy. Nor was it from motives of honorable shame that he kept this secret; he knew that his life-long ambition, to sway the imperial sceptre, would be surely defeated, if once it became known that he was a fanatical idolater and a votary of the magic art. But this outward semblance of Christianity could not deceive the keen insight of the two friends, and they felt some concern at the association which was springing up between Julian and the new-comer from Antioch, for though Tigranes was not a Christian, yet he seemed to be in a fair way of soon embracing the faith. It was rumored,

however, that he was one of those to whom Julian had promised a position in his court, as soon as he should have been raised to the dignity and power of Cæsar; and this only made the two friends more eager to turn him away from such a connection. But on the first intimation of their purpose, Tigranes began to defend his patron.

"We have everything to hope," said he, "from Julian. He is the very counterpart of Constantius; he is full of fearless intrepidity and despises anything mean or unjust."

The young Christians felt no little doubt about the qualities attributed by Tigranes to Julian, whom they really believed capable of betraying Constantius himself, when it might serve his turn.

"No, no!" insisted Tigranes, "that, never! Constantius could find no more faithful colleague in the whole empire. I know well enough that rumors have been afloat here lately of some conspiracy of Julian's against Constantius; but such things are mere extravagances. Why, even Constantius himself, accustomed as he is to suspect evil where it does not exist, not only disregards such idle talk, but even intends to raise him to the purple."

"Well," said Gregory, "that Julian is really a conspirator, I neither assert nor believe; but what I know is, that in him there are two Julians; the one, all modesty, devoted to study, assiduous in his attendance at the lectures on sacred scripture and in the meetings of the Christians; the other,

thoroughly worldly, ambitious, vain, full of pride and passion."

"As for me," said Tigranes, "I have not observed all that. In what have you perceived it?"

"Oh, in a hundred things. And if other signs were wanting, in certain very significant expressions, which sometimes escape him in conversation; in certain significant looks, which betray his disgust at the Christian sentiments uttered by some of his fellow-students. And have you never noticed that in the school of eloquence, he always declaims on the side of the idolaters?"

"That is merely for practice in the wranglings of dialectics," urged Tigranes.

"Very likely!" replied the other. "But I never knew that sneers, that looks of deep hatred, and ill-disguised expressions of contemptuous pity, had anything to do with practice in dialectics. And what is more, can you deny that he spends whole nights in close conference with that furious idolater, Libanius, who would gladly offer incense to dogs and mice, like the Egyptians? And that too, in spite of the strict prohibition of his imperial uncle."

"But that is only because of his great love of eloquence; for you know that Libanius is the most eloquent speaker of all Greece."

"Yes, eloquence! Believe that if you will. But is it only for his great love of letters that, under cover of the darkest nights, he steals away

to Ephesus to confer with the hierophant? Does he treat of style in those mysterious interviews with that accomplished sorcerer, Maximus, who came all the way from Asia on his account, under color of making a pleasure-trip?"

Tigranes had no reply to make to these revelations, and though struck by the sagacity of his opponents, and somewhat shaken in his devotion to Julian, he still muttered in an undertone:

"I know nothing about these strange secrets, and have no wish to enter into any discussion about them. I only know that Julian is a model of the highest virtues, and that it will be a happy day for the world when he can display them under the imperial purple."

"Yes, and when you can display yours under the shadow of the consular fasces—*Juliano Augusto et Tigranate Consulibus.*"

And so they parted, the two friends lamenting the ill-success of their charitable endeavor to save Tigranes from his dangerous connection with Julian; Tigranes to sail with his patron towards Milan, with a mind full of the most brilliant dreams of the future.

II.

PROSPERITY AND MISFORTUNE.

IF there be one thing which, more than another, is calculated to deceive by false appearances, it is certainly temporal prosperity founded, as it is, upon the good things of this life. And so a celebrated poet has sung:

> Se a ciascun l'interno affanno
> Si leggesse in fronte scritto,
> Quanti mai che invidia fanno
> Ci farebbero pietà.*

And indeed, courted and envied as they were, Constantius and his nephew, Julian, were really objects of pity, though the one was master of the known world, and the other had just been called to share the imperial throne, with a fair prospect of eventually becoming its sole occupant. But each was a thorn in the other's side. Constantius, a man of weak and suspicious nature, was racked by constant suspicion and fear of the very nephew whom he was raising to his throne. Julian never

* If every man but bore upon his brow
The written story of his secret care,
How many whom their fellows envy now
Would then the world's profoundest pity share?
(METASTASIO.)

forgot that his brother Gallus had been cruelly murdered by order of Constantius, and now the close proximity of one who had shed the blood of his race did but cause the poisonous fire of hatred to course more fiercely through his veins. To crown their misery, neither the Emperor nor his nephew could turn to God for consolation in their troubles, for they had both betrayed Him; the Emperor, by open persecution of the Church of Christ, Julian, by apostasy. Moreover, Constantius allowed himself to be ruled by a vile herd of eunuchs and parasites who turned him about at pleasure; and these men were even less disposed than their imperial patron to bear patiently with Julian's presence at court. By their advice, not a little strengthened by his own jealousy, Constantius kept a strict watch over his nephew, and never admitted him to a knowledge of the affairs of government, not even in the matter of the expedition to Gaul, which had been specially intrusted to him. Julian, of course, chafed under this treatment, and would fain have sought consolation in the society of the companions he had brought with him from Greece, but even this satisfaction was denied him.

In fact, Tigranes, hearing that ambassadors had just arrived from Gaul, hastened to the imperial palace, burning with curiosity to know something of the fortunes of the new Cæsar, with which his own were so intimately connected. But to his utter astonishment he was rudely stopped at the

entrance by the tribune of the guard with the challenge:

"Whither so fast, citizen?"

"To Cæsar, who awaits my coming."

"That may be; but we have orders to admit neither callers nor clients for three days to come."

"But I come at the urgent request of Cæsar himself, who sent for me last night."

"Well, I don't know anything about that. But the fact is that my orders are positive to the contrary, and I must obey them, you know."

The discomfited client paused a moment to collect his thoughts. To his surprise at this unexpected check, succeeded a vague fear of some evil fate which might threaten the new-born honors of the young Cæsar; but the train of his conjectures was broken by the sudden appearance of two young officers, well-known to him, Valentinian and Jovian.

"Long live the Flavii!" cried Tigranes, as he advanced to meet them.

His two friends returned the salutation: "Long live the Flavii! By the way, Augustus and the young Cæsar are Flavii as well as you and we. A good omen!"

"Yes, Flavii all, after a fashion! Of course there is the slight difference of a bit of purple and the trifle of a hundred or so of legions; and as I lack these little considerations, my patron will not receive me to-day."

"Of course, not at this hour," answered Jovian.

"But let us wait until the time at which he receives his friends, and we shall be admitted."

"Yes, you soldiers, perhaps; you are all of a piece. But the door of that atrium is closed to me for three days at least; I have just heard that ditty to plain music from that tribune yonder."

"He only meant that some important matter is under discussion, and that, of course, no intrusion can be allowed. Let us wait, and we shall probably be called in very soon. I have a conviction that we are on the eve of marching into Gaul. Who knows but"—

"Tut, tut, man. But see, here comes Oribasius, too, for his rebuff."

"Good morning, friends," said Oribasius, alighting from his litter and throwing off the cloak in which he had been completely muffled.

"Good morning, illustrious disciple of Hippocrates," replied Tigranes, with a grim smile, half-amused, half-spiteful. "You come just in the nick of time, for here we are all three sick enough just now."

"What's the matter?" asked Oribasius.

"Disgust, anger, rage, and a host of other symptoms of the same kind."

"What? So early? You are joking."

"No, in right good earnest. Look now. When a man jumps out of a comfortable bed and runs across the city by starlight, in such biting weather as this, to see a friend who has sent for him, and that friend whistles to him over his shoulder, 'wait

a few days'—even if that friend were Cæsar himself, do you think you would look pleasant about it?"

"By Esculapius! Then Cæsar gives no audience to-day?"

"Prescribe for yourself, Doctor. *Recipe*—ten drachms of patience, or one application of your head to this column here"—

But Oribasius was absorbed in his own thoughts. He stood for a moment rubbing his forehead with a puzzled look, as if just awaking from sleep, or like a man in a stupor; then, as if suddenly struck by a bright thought, he exclaimed:

"Why, yesterday, he insisted so particularly on my being here by early dawn. Well, I shall untangle this snarl to-day. No later than this very day I shall speak with him!"

"*Et eris mihi magnus Apollo!* Well, if you manage to find the way of getting in to-day, don't forget to tell Cæsar that three of the Flavii were here this morning awaiting his rising, and that the porter very politely showed them the outside of the door."

"Yes, I promise you to see him, and to tell him of this."

"Will you bring us the news?"

"Certainly; but where shall I find you?"

"Where? Well that is innocent! Where in the world *should* you find a man from Antioch who is spending a few days in Milan? You know that we have no way of killing time here unless we go to the Forum, the Circus, or the Hippodrome."

"Or to my house, to dine with Valentinian," added the tribune, Jovian, in a tone of courteous invitation.

"It will be most agreeable to me," answered Valentinian.

"And it will be the consummation of my earthly delight," added Tigranes, "to wash down this morning's mischance with a generous draught of your good old Falernian."

"May Bacchus be propitious to you!" said Oribasius, as he entered his litter.

"And Mercury, the patron of successful schemers, favor you!" returned Tigranes.

The two friends walked away toward the Ticinian gate, discussing as they went the strange turn events had taken. They agreed that Julian could not be responsible for the peremptory closing of the palace gates on them that morning, but that some secret influence was at work at Court against their patron. Was Constantius at the bottom of it, or was it his all-powerful chamberlain? They could not guess, but Valentinian, who was somewhat skilled in Court intrigues, thought that at any rate their best course would be to keep quiet about it for the time being, and to keep their eyes about them meanwhile. But his impetuous companion, who never knew how to control the feelings uppermost at the moment, indignantly rejected the idea of tame inaction. It was a shame and a disgrace, he thought, that such a bit of a man should give laws to the whole Roman Empire.

"What!" he exclaimed, "a eunuch makes and unmakes generals at pleasure, and scatters governments and offices as if they were things to be scrambled for! Why, a short time ago he even came very near sending a Cæsar to the block, and now he has managed to cage another one, and keeps him shut up from his friends. If there be gods in heaven, what kind of justice is this?"

"We cannot measure the justice of God by our standards. However, you had better look to Julian and not mind Constantius, who has very fitly become the merest plaything in the hands of a set of vile courtlings. The Emperor usurps the authority of the Church, and God has taken from him the rule of the empire; he would give laws to the bishops, and he is governed by slaves; he is striving to set himself above the Roman Pontiff, who is far above all human estate, and he has become inferior to creatures that cannot be called even men. Woe to the rulers who raise a hand against their mother, the Church! They can reap nothing from their sacrilegious boldness, but contempt and the curse of heaven. I trust that Julian may learn that truth if he is to rule the world!"

"Yes, yes, that is the philosophy of you Christians, I know; but it does not explain why Julian has to suffer for the faults of Constantius."

"How do you know that Julian is innocent? May he not be guilty of the same or of other faults before God, and so deserve to suffer too?"

"Guilty? Where can you show me a man more frugal, moderate, devoted to study and letters. He is a fast friend and open-handed to a fault. Do you call such things crimes?"

"Even supposing that he possesses all these qualities, might not the schooling of adversity prove a greater benefit to him than the enervating influence of an unclouded prosperity?"

"Faith! I see that I have fallen in with a very Socrates. It seems to me that I am back in Athens."

"Pshaw! Among Christians these are considered mere elementary truths. You may question the first simple old woman of them you meet, and you will find that she can tell you all these things as well as I can, and better."

"True; I remember that in Athens certain friends of mine used to advance the same doctrines."

"They were Christians, I wager."

"Precisely. One of them was a certain Basil, a young Cappadocian of rank and great wealth, but as dead set against all niceness and effeminacy as a Spartan; he was thin and wasted, and—by Jove! —you should have seen those piercing eyes of his! I remember that he was always in company with a fellow-countryman of his, a man from Nazianzum, named Gregory. What a tongue! Julian himself, who is not tongue-tied, as you know, could not stand before him, and used to give him a wide berth to avoid discussions with him. Well,

those fellows were always ready with your very philosophy."*

"And did they not persuade you to become a Christian, like Julian?"

"To tell the truth, I was a greal deal more with Julian than with them, and he never opened his mouth to me about anything of that kind."

"And what do you think of it now?"

"What *should* I think of it? I am like a man standing on one foot, who don't know where to set down the other. I am undecided whether to follow Cæsar into Gaul, or to go back to my household gods in Antioch."

"For the present," said Jovian, interrupting him, "you shall go neither to Gaul nor to Antioch, but to my house, where we shall dine together; that much is certain, and here is the house."

Meanwhile, Oribasius had been considering, on his way home, the means of contriving an interview with Julian, in spite of the imperial prohibition. His quick-witted genius and practiced cunning had soon hit upon a plan. After the next relief of guards, he proceeded to the palace and managed to gain admittance under cover of his professional character as imperial physician and confidant. On reaching the apartment of Cæsar,

* St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory of Nazianzum, fellow-students of Julian at Athens, even then knew the fierce monster that lurked under the assumed exterior of the pious student of Sacred Scripture and Eloquence. We shall yet have occasion to speak more at length on this subject.

he raised a fold of the heavy curtains at the entrance and announced himself by the salutation:

"*Salve, Cæsar!*"

Julian, who was deeply engaged in studying a map of Gaul, raised his head at the interruption, and perceiving Oribasius, rose quickly with an exclamation of surprise:

"Oh, my dear friend!"

"I don't know," continued the visitor, "whether it was Esculapius or Mercury that helped me to reach you, but here I am." And he told him of the *ruse* which had secured his entrance. Cæsar laughed, but his friend could not help observing that his gayety was not free and natural.

"It is true," said Julian, "I laugh, though I have much more reason to weep. What a hypocritical farce, to load me with a dignity which robs me of my friends, and even of the liberty of breathing freely?"

"What, has any new trouble turned up?"

"Yes, indeed. We must march into Gaul with a mere handful of men; the council held last night has literally decreed our destruction. Those eunuchs, who hold every wire here at court, under color of giving me a suite, have appointed me a guard of their vile hirelings, a gang of wretches who stop at no villany. But the hardest stroke of all comes from Augustus, who has ordered me to dismiss at once all those who accompanied me hither from Greece."

"Are you going to leave me behind, then?" inquired Oribasius, with trepidation.

"You are one of the very few whom I have succeeded in rescuing from the general proscription."*

"Thanks to the immortal gods; I breathe again!"

"Ah! but if my enemies only knew that you are my confidant! If they could but imagine how I spend the hours with you in philosophizing; that in the dead of the night Minerva and Hecate"—

"Hush! hush! Cæsar; do you forget that in the palace of Constantius the very walls have ears and tongues?"

Julian, recalled by his friend's exclamation to a sense of his position, began, in a more cautious tone, to relate to him how, on the very evening before, he had been for a long time closeted with the emperor, whom he had at last persuaded, by persevering and crafty manœuvring, to allow him the company of a few of his chosen friends, among whom was Oribasius. "It was," he added, "a great consolation to him, in his misfortune, that he would now have a faithful companion, with whom he could burn at times a grain of incense to the propitious divinities"—

* "I hardly succeeded in retaining at Court four of my particular friends . . . of whom one was cognizant of my worship of the gods, and used to assist me in this, though secretly, for we could not do otherwise . . . . another was a physician," &c.—JULIAN. APOSTAT., LITT. ATHEN.

"But what about Tigranes?" asked Oribasius, interrupting him.

"I have lost him," answered Julian. "What a blow it will be for him to learn this! It is like rending my imperial purple to tear such a friend from my side. But I think that I have already hit upon a good plan for recovering him."

"It is a sad loss, certainly; but, between ourselves," and here his voice sunk almost into a whisper, "it seems to me that he is beginning to grow weak in his adherence to Hellenism, and even leans towards the superstitions of those cursed Galileans."

"Still, my heart tells me that he will yet be one of ours. And for fidelity—why, he has not his equal in the world. True, I hear that he is a great deal with Jovian, Valentinian, and others of the most rabid Galileans; is it true?"

"Would that it were not so. And indeed if those fellows had not his ear at all times, I am sure that we should have no difficulty in managing him."

"Well, then, it seems to be a special providence of the gods that he is removed from us for a short time, for these two tribunes (curses on the malice of those eunuchs,) are among the few who are to accompany me into Gaul."

Time was urgent; the departure of the expedition had been fixed for the morrow. Julian, therefore, commissioned Oribasius to see Tigranes at once, and to tell him how the prince had been obliged, to his own great grief, to part from so

dear a friend. "But Tigranes must not give up all hope; as soon as Julian was once out of sight of Milan and in his encampments, he would receive his friend in his tent, where they might secretly meet for the present. The mad jealousy of the courtiers must soon yield to other influences, and then he should be openly received as Cæsar's companion and friend, if he was still so minded. As for yourself," said Julian in conclusion, "from this day forward, as soon as the imperial orders are made known, you will have free access to me at any time. But now hasten to carry out my instructions; tell him that I shall expect him, without fail, at Turin."

Tigranes was just at the height of his long growing admiration for the lofty principles and heroic virtues of his Christian friends and of their fellow-believers, when he was sent for to hear from Oribasius the sad message from Cæsar. He was obliged to call into action all his self-control not to betray any signs of what he really felt within him; he only exclaimed:

"You are indeed the bearer of evil tidings to me now. I had bound my fortunes to his, and now all my hopes and designs have come to nought. Unfortunate man that I am!"

"Cheer up, man," said Oribasius, encouragingly, "all hope is not yet lost."

"My star is setting before it has fairly risen," continued Tigranes; "fortune is against me."

"No," said his friend, "but fortune may be over-

come by constancy. Cæsar awaits you without fail at Turin."

"Good!" cried Tigranes, recovering his usual spirits. "At Turin it shall be."

III.

THE PERSECUTORS AND THE PERSECUTED.

IN the brief interval of time between the discomfiture of the three clients of the young Cæsar at the gates of the imperial palace and the announcement made by Oribasius to Tigranes that Julian awaited him at Turin, the latter had made acquaintances and heard things which caused him considerable surprise at the time, and proved to be very beneficial to him at a later period.

Leading out from the Ticinian Gate, and following the enclosed space walled in by Maximian, there is a road which winds on towards the Vercellian Gate, near which, at the time of our narrative, stood an imperial country-seat where Julian had made his abode until Eusebia introduced him into the palace. Not far off was the camp, and half-way on the road to it, surrounded by thickly shaded gardens, rose a lovely villa, the retired and solitary abode of Hormisdas. Debarred by vio-

lence from his right to the Persian throne, on which his father had sat, Hormisdas was enjoying, at the hands of Constantine and his successors, the hospitality of the Roman court. The hard fate which deprived him of a rightful throne was, however, more than alleviated by the rich blessings it procured him instead, for he had learned and sincerely embraced the truths of Christianity, so that whilst his brother Sapor was staining their father's purple with Christian blood, the exiled prince was proving himself not only the faithful disciple, but the generous champion of the proscribed religion. Retired—perhaps it would be almost as true to say hidden—in this same retreat, dwelt an illustrious deacon named Sabinus, who had remained in Milan after the banishment of its saintly bishop by Constantius, to act as guardian to the orphaned flock.

The proximity of this residence to the camp had led the tribune Jovian to seek its hospitality, which was extended to him freely and generously, and here he lived as if in his own house. While Tigranes and Valentinian were waiting in the atrium, admiring the graceful colonnade which surrounded the impluvium, and the skilfully wrought fret-work of the roof which rose above them, Jovian had gone to inform his host of the presence of the two guests who had just arrived; one of them a citizen of Antioch, the other, Valentinian, who was already known to him.

"What kind of a man is he of Antioch?" asked Hormisdas in reply.

"A comely youth of noble presence. He bears himself like a real patrician. In fact, on his first appearance at court with Julian, he attracted universal attention."

"What is his name?"

"Flavius Tigranes."

"Is he one of the Brethren?"

"To tell the truth, he is not even a catechumen. But still he is one of ours."

"Are you sure that he is perfectly free from any stain of Arianism?"

"Oh, as to that, certainly. He is not baptized, and has not yet taken sides. But if he has any leaning at all, he certainly inclines, like Cæsar, to the Catholics."

"Then I can be free with him and bring in our companion, Sabinus. You know how outspoken the holy man is about the present state of affairs."

"You may act without reserve; otherwise I should not have invited him here without first notifying you."

His fears and doubts thus quieted, Hormisdas went to greet the strangers. He was followed by two slaves who brought cushions for the seats, and as he met the strangers, he at once extended to them a cheerful welcome, cordially gave them his hand, embraced them, and then invited them to be seated. After the usual expressions of courtesy had passed, Hormisdas rose and led his guests to the chambers prepared for visitors, pointing out to

them, in passing, the entrance to the baths and to the gardens.

"Use all that you find here," said he, "as your own; my slaves are at your call. Your rooms look out upon the terrace, though perhaps, for the moment, you would prefer to enjoy the autumnal scene, lighted by the slanting rays of the setting sun, which you can view to advantage from the *exedra*,* here on the ground floor. I have also something of a library here; and an Alexandrian freedman of mine, who seems to be never out of it, will be delighted to open out everything for you, and show you what he calls some rare curiosities. If you will excuse me for the present, I shall hasten to dispatch some letters by the messenger of a friend of mine who is about to return home. I shall have the pleasure of seeing you soon again at dinner." And with these words Hormisdas retired, taking leave of his guests with a graceful salutation.

"Do you know," asked Jovian of Tigranes, "with whom you have just been speaking?"

"Why, with a wealthy gentleman of Milan; a friend of yours, I suppose."

"Better than that."

"Well then, with a patrician perhaps, or a man of consular rank?"

* The *exedra*, in Roman houses, was a hall furnished with seats and used for purposes of conversation, or for those disputations of which the intellectual men of the time seem to have been so fond.

"Better still than that."

"Indeed, he must be a *very* great man then! Perhaps some august majesty bereft of the purple?"

"You have hit it exactly. He is no less a personage than the King of Persia."

"Just as I am Consul of Rome, you mean."

"Yes, and a trifle more; for he is really and truly the son of Hormisdas the Second, and elder brother to Sapor, the actual sovereign."

"By Jove! Is it possible? True, I had heard of him in Antioch and in Athens, but I was very far indeed from suspecting that I was face to face with him. So calm! So serene amid such rude shocks of adverse fortune! Certainly that is stoicism, and of the best quality too."

"No, but he is a Christian; and that is much better than being a stoic."

"But why did you not tell me all this in the beginning? Did you not know that I am half Persian, and that my father left Persia whilst I was still a mere child?"

But the attention of our two friends was attracted by the suite of apartments into which they had passed during their conversation. They were struck with admiration at the richness and elegance of the rooms, the galleries, and all the details of furniture and ornament, which, however, showed nothing of Oriental luxury. Tigranes could not help expressing some surprise at this, for he knew what a princely allowance Hormisdas

received from the emperor, and he accordingly turned to his companion as if expecting some explanation on the subject. Jovian explained that Hormisdas had formerly showed what blood was in him, and had distinguished himself on the battle-fields of Persia; but now he had devoted himself wholly to the pursuits of peace, and would never raise a finger against Sapor, unless constrained to do so by the emperor. "But further," continued Jovian, whose position in the household afforded him a more intimate knowledge of their noble host, "since he became a Christian, he has been much more lavish of his means in behalf of our poorer brethren than for any other purpose; he frequently goes to the prisons to visit those who are condemned for professing the true faith."

But not even the surprise and rush of feelings excited by the knowledge that he had been conversing freely with a man of so much note in the world could banish from the mind of Tigranes the anxiety he felt about Julian. Since the last message sent him by his imperial patron, every hour seemed to him an age until Oribasius should come again to give him some information on the real state of affairs, and to clear up the mystery of that unlucky morning call. While awaiting the hour for dinner, he sought the baths, in the hope of thus whiling away the lagging hours. As he passed leisurely through the various apartments pertaining to the Roman baths, he was struck by the absence of those worse than indelicate repre-

sentations which usually adorned the walls of such apartments among the pagans. His astonishment was increased when he proceeded to take his bath; for instead of the multitudinous attendance of slaves with every appurtenance of luxury and of sensuous refinement which he had been accustomed to find in such places, he saw but one attendant, an old slave, who carefully and promptly attended to supplying him with all that he might need, and then withdrew into the dressing-room. The same surprise awaited him at the table of his host, where he found all that taste and refinement could suggest, but not a trace of the sensuality and extravagance so prevalent at that time among the wealthy. Tigranes, who had his eyes about him, as was natural on his first visit to such a household, noticed that Hormisdas, before taking his place at the table, had very prominently made upon his person a large sign of the cross, and prayed for a moment in silence, in which actions he was followed by Jovian and Valentinian. He saw also that the place of honor was left vacant, and that Hormisdas had not invited him or any other to take it. The mystery was solved, however, as soon as the first course had been served, by the entrance of a man evidently of mature age, of grave demeanor and venerable countenance, who courteously saluted the party as he entered, and occupied the vacant place.

"Who is that?" whispered Tigranes to Jovian.

"A guest of Hormisdas," said his companion.

"Of course; but I mean, what is his name, and who is he?"

"Can you keep a secret?" asked Jovian.

"Certainly. But come, answer me."

"He is Sabinus,* the true father and the support of the Christians in their present painful trials. The Arians, who are now strong in the imperial protection, have broken into our churches, and we may think it doubtless a great mercy that we are not hunted from our private oratories. Their intruded bishop took care, first of all, to pocket the revenues of the Church; and now the virgins consecrated to God, the widows and the destitute little ones of the flock are thrown upon the world for the support which they abundantly received from that fund until now. But this holy deacon is continually on foot, begging in every Christian household to supply, by private charities, for what they have lost, and his untiring zeal is generally successful"—

Jovian here suddenly paused in his whispered description, for he saw that Sabinus, who had been

* St. Sabinus, or Savinus, was one of the great saints of this period. He was afterwards sent to St. Basil, in the East, two years before the beginning of St Ambrose's episcopate. He is probably the same St. Sabinus or Savinus who was bishop of Piacenza. What he is represented as relating is historical, as will be seen by referring to Baronius or Tillemont, who gathered their information from contemporaneous sources. Mention is made of Hormisdas and his visits to the Martyrs, in the Acts of Sts. Bonosus and Maximilian. *Vid* Ruinart's trans. of Luchini, vol. IV, p. 313.

engaged in another direction, was turning towards the new guest, whom he had not before perceived. He had been told that Tigranes was an intimate friend of Julian, and one of those who had come with the young Cæsar from the East, and taking it for granted that he was one of the Brethren, after exchanging the usual courtesies of a first address, he began to inquire about the Church in Asia, and to lament the calamities which had befallen the faithful in Milan. The good old man seemed to be particularly afflicted at the thought that the Portian Basilica had become a sink of heresy. "That venerable pile," he exclaimed, "bequeathed to us by the first Christians of Milan, where they had perhaps heard the teachings of Jesus Christ from the lips of the Apostle Barnabas himself, ought to have commanded the respect of the very enemies of the faith. At that same altar Caius officiated, and Mirocles—those men of God. It seems to me that its walls still love to keep alive the echoes of the great voice of Dionysius! Alas, he is now an exile in a foreign land, and from his place the enemies of God scatter the seeds of impiety! How the sainted bones of the great Victor must stir uneasily in their vault when they hear such sounds!* On that very spot, in the sight of the

* St. Victor suffered martyrdom under Maximian precisely *in the little wood which is known as "The Elms," where the emperor had a pleasure-garden, (ad Silvulam quæ ad Ulmos vocatur, ubi viridarium habebat imperator,)* as may be seen in the Acts of the Saints, by the Bollandists—May 8th—though these Acts are,

whole people,—my mother was an eye-witness of the deed, and has often repeated the story in my hearing—for the faith of Jesus Christ he suffered scourge, and rack, and fire, and death; and now, over those sacred relics, the Arian blasphemies resound. In what does he who boasts himself the son of Constantine differ from Maximian? What difference is there between that persecutor and our Protector? If the old hostility was more bloody, this is more dangerous. Soldiers, Victor was a soldier of the emperor, just as you are; he was offered promotion, honor, dignities—he preferred death. Remember this, for I see but too clearly that the day is at hand when we shall have to choose between apostasy and martyrdom." The old man, forgetful of the dishes set before him, had raised himself up on his couch as he gave vent to his feelings, and as he thus leaned upon his elbow and turned towards his hearers, he presented a striking picture—his face was wet with tears of emotion, but yet radiant with a supernatural light; the deepest indignation and the warmest charity seemed to have met in that look. All had remained perfectly still and speechless during this outburst; even the slaves who were waiting on the

perhaps, to some extent interpolated in places. The Basilica which bears his name is closely linked with the earliest memories of the illustrious Church of Milan. And yet, even in our own day, the fury of the impious enemies of Truth has attacked this venerable monument which the faithful of Milan look upon as the cradle of their Apostolic faith.

table, stood spellbound and unable to move. But Sabinus himself was the first to turn their attention to lighter topics, and helped much to make the rest of the meal pass pleasantly in profitable conversation. He partook sparingly, and only of the simpler dishes, but his meal was often interrupted by deep sighs which betrayed the intensity of those pent-up emotions excited in a father's breast at the thought of his children's sorrow.

As soon as the tables had been removed, the slaves strewed saw-dust upon the marble floor and swept it away with their hard polishing-brushes, according to the custom in the mansions of the wealthy, where the tessellated pavement was always kept carefully polished. Then, instead of being amused with the singing and dancing girls from the East, who usually furnished the after-dinner entertainments of the dissolute Romans at this period, the company drew around the venerable deacon, all anxious to hear something of the state of the Church, about their exiled bishop and the Sovereign Pontiff Liberius. Tigranes, whose knowledge of all these things amounted to very little more than nothing, seemed very eager to know what the questions were about.

"I did hear in Greece," he said, by way of explanation, "that Milan had, within these last few months, witnessed some serious disturbances."

"What!" exclaimed Sabinus, "you are one of Cæsar's familiar friends, and know so little about the most important affairs of the empire!"

"Julian was not yet Cæsar at the time of these occurrences," replied Tigranes, "and our heads were full of philosophy just then. Indeed, we hardly knew of the campaigns against the Alemani and against Silvanus. It was rumored that the Western bishops had openly resisted the authority of Augustus, and had been dealt with accordingly."

"Are you a Christian," cried Sabinus, "and speak thus?"

"Excuse me, Reverend Father," whispered Jovian to the old man, "this youth is not yet even baptized."

"Even so," continued Sabinus; "I must not leave him in such ignorance. He will soon probably have a place in the sacred councils of Cæsar, and I would have the truth go thither with him."

"And I am ready to hear you," replied Tigranes, calmly.

"Come a little aside; let us together"—

"Rather here among us all!" cried the whole party, anxious to hear him on such a topic. Speak, Father, for whilst so many things are said against the Bishops and against the Pontiff himself, it will be gratifying to learn the truth from an eye-witness."

"Poor legions!" exclaimed Sabinus. "Yet they are Christian. But when the kings of the earth are in league against the truth, who shall stay the progress of falsehood? The whole population of Milan will bear witness to the atrocious violence which forced upon us that unfortunate

Bishop, Auxentius, who is apart from us in everything—a Greek in language, a heretic in faith, and disreputable in morals. Yet I am sure that the camp has been made to believe that the Church of Milan considers itself happy in the change."

"Yes," replied Tigranes, "and it was even reported that the Grand Chamberlain, Eusebius, was obliged to hasten to the basilica to appease the tumult."

"And besides," added another member of the party, "it was even asserted that the Pope refused to listen to the suggestions of Augustus, and went so far as to insult him in public."

"The same old story!" said Sabinus, bowing his head upon his clasped hands, "the same old story! they persecute the just man and then heap calumnies upon him. It was so in the beginning, and so it shall be to the end. The first Pontiff, Jesus Christ, was nailed to a cross and loaded with all manner of calumnies; and in Him we see the calumniated Pontiffs of all time to come."

"What shall I say then in Gaul," asked Tigranes, "if any of the brethren inquire about the Council of Milan and Pope Liberius?"

"Say? This you shall say; that here, in this Metropolitan See, where Constantine signed the first decree which gave freedom to the Church, a successor, one of his own blood, has banished Catholic bishops and exiled the common Father of all the faithful. You shall tell them that while the people of Milan were bending before the holy

altars, anxiously awaiting the decision of the three hundred bishops who were gathered together in the sanctuary, and were entreating them to give glory to Jesus Christ the true God, the Emperor was surrounding the holy place with a ruthless soldiery to strike terror into the flock and its pastors. But in vain! All, even women, old men, young children and delicate maidens, protested with one voice, that rather than deny the divinity of Christ they would bathe that holy temple in their blood and shield the tabernacles with their bodies. O my country! how lovely, how great didst thou appear to me on that memorable day when, closely knit to thy bishop, thou didst struggle to preserve thy faith, and didst pray for victory amid the tombs of the martyrs! The morning dawned on a night spent in prayers and tears, but with it came a wretched bishop, a fallen angel, a man of venal faith and gloomy brow. He was escorted by a eunuch from the palace; but when he ventured into the pulpit to preach submission to the imperial decrees, he was met by a storm of indignation which he was not prepared to brave. The very name of the emperor which, under all other circumstances, would have been treated with respect and veneration when quoted as an authority in matters of faith, was received with scorn and derision; the women, even of the poorest class and the most ignorant, stopped their ears and turned their backs upon the intruder with the most unmistakable signs of contempt. From all sides arose

the cry: 'It is not for court-prelates to change the decisions of the Bishops of Rome!' 'You are not our bishop; we have Dionysius!' 'We believe in Jesus Christ and not in Augustus!' 'Away, hireling of the emperor, tool of the eunuchs!'

"It was to me truly heart-rending to see the episcopal dignity so degraded. But what could we do? When once a priest has forfeited his stainless glory, neither the favor of courts nor the protection of princes can save him from the shame which God will surely heap upon his rebellious head. This unhappy Germinus, as the intruded bishop was called, had no course left him under the circumstances but to come down from the pulpit and make the best of his way back to the emperor, to tell him of the greeting with which he had met."

"But what was the emperor's object in all this?" asked Tigranes, who had not yet penetrated the real state of the case.

"He would teach the Church the true faith, restore its discipline and increase the pomp of its worship."

"Very well! and so you priests are not willing to be protected?"

"It is the bounden duty of princes to protect the Church, but not to rule her; much less to remove from the sacred precincts of the sanctuary the council of bishops, and to shut them up in the imperial palace under the care of the prætorian guards, as our protector Augustus is doing just

now. But, thank God! there was still courage enough left in one man to meet him face to face. Constantius had taken his stand behind a heavy curtain so as to hear the debates of the council without being seen. To what undignified measures kings are driven when they try to be bishops! The prelates had but just now heard the imperial ministers propounding to them the doctrine of Augustus; they were weary of this disgraceful comedy, and their just indignation found expression in the fearless answer of the Legate of Pope Liberius: 'Even should the emperor turn against us the whole power of the empire, the faith of Nicæa shall be our faith and Jesus Christ our God! No more blasphemies, then; no more sacrilegious edicts!' This was too much for the pride of Constantius. Tearing aside the veil which concealed him, he appeared, pale with rage, before the assembly. But those noble confessors of the faith, firm and fearless in the consciousness of right, rose in a body and declared that whoever denies to Christ the worship due to God, does by the very fact take part with Antichrist. What a splendid triumph for religion! A handful of priests, many bent beneath the weight of years, unarmed, imprisoned, standing unterrified before a powerful emperor, young, armed and fired with anger!

"'Insolent wretches!' cried the prince, furiously, 'yield to my commands; condemn what I condemn!'

"'Augustus,' was the reply, 'you command us to betray the faith. We cannot! You condemn the Bishop Athanasius; we cannot lawfully approve of the condemnation unless we know his crime and hear his accusers.'

"'I am the accuser,' said the emperor, haughtily, 'I, the master of the world.'

"'You cannot be his accuser, Augustus,' replied the council; 'you were not a witness of the facts in the case, and therefore the ecclesiastical law does not recognize your right to depose against the bishop.'

"'My will is law!'

"'For the state, perhaps, but not for the Church.'

"'Wretches! You shall perish in exile. My vengeance shall fall heavily upon these froward Churchmen!'

"'Any spot on the face of the earth will afford us a country where we may still adore Jesus Christ,' was the final answer of the bishops, 'and His wrath only is to be feared.'

"The passion which he had been struggling, though so imperfectly, to contain, now broke out uncontrolled. Drawing his sword in his blind fury, Constantius cried out in a voice choked with rage:

"'To prison with these obstinate rebels; away with them to destruction!'

"And thus was the council broken up. When the veil of darkness could cover their impious

deed, bands of armed men surrounded the basilica where the people were praying for the triumph of truth and of the Church. These satellites of the tyrant broke into the sacred inclosure, and violated the holy sanctuary, which resounded with their blasphemous cries and with the clanking of chains. One hundred and fifty of the faithful, both clergy and laymen, were loaded with fetters at a sign from the brutal eunuch who commanded the party. Thrice I offered my hands to the gyves; but thrice, alas! I was rejected. God had chosen worthier victims, and now I am left alone, like the prophet in desolate Jerusalem, to weep over the widowhood of this Church and the smoking ruins of religion."

A long and reverential pause followed this sorrowful plaint of Sabinus, but at last Tigranes, who had been quite captivated by the simple dignity of the venerable narrator's manner and language, ventured to break the silence:

"Father," he asked, using the manner of address which he had learned from the Christians, "what has become of Liberius? It was said in Athens that he had greatly provoked the emperor."

"It is the great misfortune of Constantius," replied the deacon, "that instead of learning from the Pontiff what is most for the good of religion, he insists upon teaching him his duty; and the constancy of the Vicar of Christ, he styles obstinacy. I bow with all respect before the sovereign who rules within his proper sphere, over the con-

cerns of his kingdom; but when he strives to sway the spiritual authority in the Church, I can but pity him. He has driven from their sees the true pastors of the flock, and set up in their stead men who are enemies to God and the Sovereign Pontiff; and while his victims, from their prisons or their exile in distant lands, or under the scourge, gave their silent testimony to the emperor's perfidy, he had determined to force some expression of approval and praise from the Pontiff. Eusebius, one of the proudest, but vilest of the courtiers, was sent to Rome with orders to bring over the Pope to the views of the emperor. I happened to be at that very time in Rome, whither I had been sent to confer with the Pope on the state of our persecuted Church, and I saw that arrogant minister of the imperial tyrant, with the bearing of one who is wont to bend or to break every will opposed to his own, enter the Lateran palace, and present himself before the Vicar of Jesus Christ as before a subordinate officer of the empire. After presenting the gifts sent by the emperor, the envoy added in a haughty tone: 'Accept the favors of Augustus, hear his advice, and confirm the sentence pronounced by him in the Council of Milan; such is the emperor's order.' And then adding insult to insolence, he seized the hand which so many better men kiss with reverence. A hardly perceptible smile of noble indignation appeared for a moment on the lips of the outraged Pontiff. 'Tell your master,' he said with quiet dignity,

'that decrees on matter of faith are written, not in the palaces of kings, but in the synods of bishops. Athanasius, whom he condemns, has been declared innocent by the Church; the Arians, whom you and the emperor protect, are the only ones lawfully condemned.' Eusebius was not used to such replies; and forgetful, in his mortification, of the difference between his own condition and the dignity of Liberius, he broke out into violent and threatening invectives; but finding that this course was not likely to work more successfully than the offers of illusory favor, he gathered up the imperial presents, and angrily hurried away from the presence of the Pope. He had the presumption to offer those rejected gifts on the altar of St. Peter, in the Vatican Basilica; but they could not long remain there, for the Pontiff ordered them to be removed thence, as the unacceptable offerings of a heretic and a persecutor of the Church. And these are the crimes for which Liberius has been torn by violence from his throne.

"The sacred basilicas were immediately beset by armed men, while the dwellings of the faithful citizens were surrounded by bodies of troops and bands of hired bravoes. The Catholic ladies withdrew to the country to avoid meeting the barbarous soldiery of Eusebius; Rome presented a shocking scene of violence and terror, which was increased daily by fresh dispatches and ruthless orders from the furious emperor. To crown all their other deeds of violence, a band of the savage

hirelings of Constantius forced an entrance into the peaceful walls of the Lateran palace, and laid sacrilegious hands upon the Vicar of Jesus Christ. The emperor was filled with impious joy on learning that the Bishop of Rome was approaching Milan as a prisoner, and already he began to promise himself an easy triumph; but Liberius was bringing him defeat and discomfiture instead. What a spectacle! It seems to me that I see him still standing unterrified before the angry emperor, surrounded by all the apparatus of sovereign majesty, and attended by some cowardly priests, paid to second the tyrant in his unholy project. Oh! that the noble words of the great Pontiff could have been sculptured in bronze, to stand as a lasting monument and lesson for future Cæsars!

"'Have you not yet persecuted the Church enough?' he exclaimed, looking steadily at the emperor; 'and would you now make me a traitor to my trust, a stumbling-block to the faithful? No! I am ready to die, but not to become a tool of your iniquity. Augustus, beware how you further provoke the wrath of Him who gave you the empire; it is hard for you to kick against the goad!'

"Constantius, whose great object was to obtain the Pope's confirmation of his sentence, dissembled his rage for the moment, and addressed the Pontiff with feigned reverence: 'Because you are the chief pastor of my eternal city I have called you to the

court to confirm the sentence already pronounced by my faithful bishops.'

"'I cannot,' answered Liberius firmly.

"'Other bishops have already approved it,' urged the emperor.

"'Yes,' said the Pope, 'those few who could betray justice and conscience.'

"Eusebius now made an effort to support his master by offering a new proposal; but Liberius did not even reply. One of the venal court bishops who supported Constantius said aloud, that the Pope maintained this invincible obstinacy only that he might afterwards boast in Rome of the firmness with which he had faced the emperor. This suggestion seemed to sting the emperor to new fury, and he broke out more fiercely than ever: 'And do you then think yourself so strong that you can alone withstand him whom the whole world obeys?'

"'Three youths alone were too strong for the mighty Nabuchodonosor,' was the simple reply.

"Constantius was inwardly writhing with vexation and disappointment. But seeing that nothing was to be gained by threats he once more had recourse to feigned respect and submission. He represented to the Pontiff that one word of approval from him would be more prized then than the triumphs over Magnentius and Silvanus which had won him the empire. In such a cause Liberius could not be mollified by entreaties any more than he had been terrified by menaces.

"'All that I ask of you,' cried the emperor, growing impatient again, 'is that you confirm my sentence; then you may return to Rome.'

"'I have already bid adieu to Rome,' answered Liberius; 'I would rather abide in justice than in Rome.'

"'I give you three days to consider,' said the emperor.

"'It is a useless delay; I have already determined upon my line of duty.'

"'But I will banish you.'

"'Well, banishment cannot change my mind.'"

At this point of the narrative of Sabinus, all the company—Jovian, Valentinian, Hormisdas—broke out into exclamations of admiration and approval, as if they had been witnesses of the noble bearing of the great Pontiff; even Tigranes, though not a Christian, exclaimed with enthusiasm: "O noble old man! heroic Pontiff!" But perceiving that Sabinus was beginning to speak again, they returned to their former respectful attention. The old man continued his story:

"The emperor sent the Pope five hundred gold pieces, as he said, to supply him with necessaries on his journey. The offer was refused, as was also a similar one from the empress, with the reply: 'The alms of the faithful will be enough for me.' But when the perfidious eunuch, in imitation of his employers, came with hypocritical commiseration to offer him money, the exiled Pontiff could not restrain his indignation: 'What?' he exclaimed,

'did you think that the Vicar of Christ would accept as alms the gold of which you have plundered the Church? Go, and learn what it is to be a Christian!' And so amid the tears and the admiration of the Christian world, the noble Pontiff Liberius entered upon his exile three months ago."

"How we have been deceived in this matter!" exclaimed Tigranes.

"But his children here were not deceived. They thronged about him, kneeling for his blessing, as he passed through the streets of Milan on his way to Thrace. The people of Rome were not deceived, for as soon as they learned the sad tidings they hastened in crowds to the sacred basilicas to weep and to pray before the Lord in behalf of their exiled Father. In vain did the court attempt to force upon them another pastor; they drove from among them that wretched tool of the eunuchs, and swore that Rome should never know any Pontiff other than Liberius, while he lived."

"Noble people," cried Tigranes, "worthy of their Bishop!"

"What you now say here, good youth," said Sabinus, "repeat in the councils of Julian; and may God grant you a yet fuller share of the light of faith!"

"I shall never forget it," said Tigranes.

"Nor I," added Jovian.

"Nor I," repeated Valentinian.

"Noble tribunes," exclaimed Sabinus, "you are worthy of your faith; may our God protect you!

At least He has still some brave souls who have not yet bowed the knee to Baal."

The aged deacon was evidently fatigued by the excitement and the length of his discourse. Hormisdas perceiving it, gently took his hand and said, as he pressed it to his lips: "Reverend Father, you need a little rest;" and with gentle violence he drew him away to his own apartments. The young men continued for some time to speak with admiration of the heroic fortitude displayed by the confessors of Christ; even Tigranes, calling up memories of the heroes of Greece and Rome, with which his mind was well filled, extolled Liberius as far above them all. Indeed so entirely was he carried away by his admiration of what he had heard, that he seemed to have almost forgotten the great affair of Julian.

Oribasius, however, did not forget it, as we have already seen.

IV.

THE CAMP BEFORE TURIN.

ON the day following that which had brought to Tigranes the summons to meet his imperial patron at Turin, Julian was marching with his legions towards Gaul. Among the tribunes who accompanied him in this expedition were Jovian and Valentinian, two officers whom Julian would certainly never have selected himself, because they were Christians; but the choice of his officers had been taken out of his own hands, and the appointment was made by Constantius.

A short march brought the army to the banks of the Dora which they crossed at once, and found themselves on those dreary, barren plains from which rose the towers of ancient Turin.* The soldiers looked wistfully at those beautiful gates surmounted by the marble statue of Jupiter, upon the base of which was the inscription: JUPITER CUSTOS AUGUSTÆ TAURINORUM. They would have given much to have entered those gates, but the detachment which had been sent before to select a

* The *Taurium*, or perhaps rather *Augusta Taurinorum* of the ancients, is our Turin. *Segustum* is the modern *Susa; Mons Matrona* is Mt. Ginevro; *Vesulus*, is Mt. Viso; *Mons Jovis*, Mt. Jupiter, is the Great St. Bernard. The inscription spoken of here as written under the statue of Jupiter over the gates, is a matter of history.

site for the camp, had passed by the walls and pitched upon a spot west of the city. The tribune in command of this party having discovered a small eminence on the road to Segusium, set up the imperial standard there. A square of two hundred feet was traced out for the *prætorium*, and with this for a standard the rest of the camp was laid out, after the usual manner of the Romans, in a square. The various divisions of the camp were measured off and marked by the tents of the various tribunes according to their legions, an open space for the forum was cleared, and all this so expeditiously that when the legions arrived they had only to march into their various quarters without any delay; in a few hours everything was in perfect order—the arms stacked, the tents set up, the baggage properly disposed of, and even the wall and ditch around the camp completed. Meanwhile, Julian, whose knowledge of castrametation was altogether theoretical, rode about among the laborers, surrounded by his officers, more like a raw recruit than a commanding officer; and when he retired at evening to his tent, he could not help exclaiming: "Well! they have made a mess of it certainly in sending me at the head of the army. My gentle Plato! who would have believed that thy philosophic pages were preparing me to be a great military leader." And yet the young and untried general showed that there was good hope of success for him, and that the Athenian student inherited no mean share of Constantine's genius.

Well for him had he but possessed more of that great man's piety together with what he had of his military talent!

The army was to remain three days encamped on the plains before Turin. But the time was not lost by Julian; for it was his wont ever since his elevation to power, to devote some hours of the night to business and to study. On one of these evenings as he was holding a council with the officers of the prætorium and the court officials appointed by Constantius to accompany him, the conversation happened to turn upon the strategic position of the city.

"We are upon the exact spot where Constantine once fought," remarked an officer. "It was here he came down from Mount Matrona, and marching along this very valley of the Dora, here fell upon Turin and gained the first of those victories which secured to him all Italy as far as Milan."

"It is on the very route followed by Hannibal," said another.

"No, his route lay over Mount Vesulus."

This allusion brought others into the discussion, some asserting that he had passed through the gorges of Mt. Cenis, others that he had crossed Mt. Jupiter.

"At any rate," remarked one of the *savans* of the party, "the inhabitants of Turin paid dear for their resistance."

"Yes, but she has risen again from her ashes,

like the phœnix, fairer than ever. See what a circus, what a theatre, what arches!"

"And what splendid temples!" added Julian.

"Yes," said Valentinian, "and even ours (meaning the Christians) have a beautiful Basilica there."

"And yet," remarked Oribasius, who had just returned from the city, "the whole population is devoted to Diana; you meet with shrines of the goddess at every turn. I was told, too, a few hours ago, that on this very night there are to be great sacrifices offered there, when they expect to receive oracular responses concerning important events of the coming year. Though, to tell the truth, I have no idea that they will come away from their sacrifice wiser than they went."

"It seems to me," interposed Valentinian, a little warmly, "that the laws ought to be in force here as well as anywhere else; for these nocturnal sacrileges, besides being shockingly impious, are always followed by execrable scenes of debauchery and crime."

"Well, the laws *are* in force here," answered Julian, anticipating Oribasius. "I am sure that no sacrifice is offered within those walls, and if some ignorant clown happens to take a notion to sacrifice a kid or a cur to Hecate, for good fortune, I cannot see why the world should be set agog about it"

At this point the attention of those immediately around Julian was attracted by an animated dispute among the other officers in the imperial

pavilion. It turned out to be Jovian, who was maintaining that the cross, which had appeared to Constantine, had been seen just over the range of beautifully serrated hills that stood out clearly against the blue sky to the eastward of Turin.*

"I have it," said he, "from an old veteran, who fought under Constantine, and who entered Turin close at the emperor's side on the day of the battle. He told me that story a hundred times over when I was a boy, and my father, Varronianus, when we lived in Singido, in Pannonia, used to make him repeat it every time that he sat at our table. I can see him now dipping his finger in his wine and tracing upon the table the form of the cross and the words, 'IN THIS CONQUER,' and my father used to laugh till he cried, especially when the good old fellow was a little unsteady and used to make the most billowy kind of lines one could wish to see."

"Veteran or no veteran," exclaimed several, "we have heard it from hundreds who were on the spot."

* There seems to be some dispute about the precise place where the celebrated vision of the Cross was granted to Constantine, some placing it in Gaul, others near Rome, others again in northern Italy. We incline to the last named place, and have consequently assigned the heights of Soperga, at the present time crowned by a famous temple to the Mother of God, as the scene of the prodigy. But in adopting this probable opinion we have not the least intention of attacking that of others, leaving to archæologists the labor of ascertaining the truth of the matter.

"Very good," objected a few, "but we should like to have seen that cross ourselves."

"What?" cried Valentinian. "Is it not enough that the Divine Constantine saw it, and his whole army with him? Do you count for nothing his word, the victory of that day, and the Labarum which commemorates it?"

Julian, who always experienced a feeling of hatred and loathing whenever he heard the name of Constantine mentioned, but who still did not wish to betray his state of mind, perceiving that the discussion was growing warm, rose to his feet and dismissed his suite, saying that he wished to make the round of the camp, but unattended; and wrapping himself up completely in his military cloak, he made a sign to Oribasius, who followed him out.

"Ho! ho!" said an old officer, with a malicious wink at his companions, as they separated, "so he is putting on some of Hadrian's ways; he must make the round alone! But I'm afraid he'll miss it this time, if instead of taking along some old Chiron of a veteran, he uses a physician as a guide."

Julian's reason for not taking as the companion of his walk any of the old Chirons of the camp, was his desire to be alone with Oribasius, to treat of certain matters not suited to the public ear. As soon as they were out of hearing, Julian broke out angrily:

"That fellow is ever prating about the Divine

Constantine! I am heartily sick of it! He seems to think that there is no other emperor in the Roman annals to talk about. It is always, 'Constantine the Great! Constantine the Victorious! Constantine the Divine!' And by Jove! he was, after all, nothing but a snivelling, degenerate and impious Galilean."

"Very true; but take care how you express your opinion in public. The vulgar are not at the height of our philosophy."

"But can't any man with half an eye see that he never did a solitary thing worth speaking of? What do all his achievements amount to? They are like those gardens of dry branches set in the sand,—to-day a great glory, to-morrow all chaff,—nothing lasting. Do you suppose he ever imagined that his nephew would be going to-night to offer sacrifice to Hecate? And yet here I am, about to offer sacrifice to my heart's content, and right in the teeth of his ordinances."*

"And of those of Constantius too," replied Oribasius; "for he is at this very moment preparing new laws to prevent our sacrifices."

"Yes," said Julian, "and in spite of all the Galileans; may Jove blast them with his thunderbolts!

* Julian, in his work on the *Cæsars*, p. 329, compares the deeds of Constantine to those artificial gardens of Adonis, which were planted in the evening, and on the morrow were dead. But it may be asked what Julian himself ever did that lasted longer. So it is always; unprincipled tyrants seek for glory in calumniating honorable rulers, and Julian possessed in an eminent degree all the worst instincts of all tyrants.

It would be worse than folly to pass by Turin without conciliating the mother of the Cæsars, whose temple has stood here for ages, and without consulting Hecate, the goddess of night, in the present straits of my fortunes."

"Your counsel is really from the gods," said Oribasius.

The end of this conversation found them at the prætorian gate or main entrance of the camp. The centurion of the guard recognizing his imperial commander at once removed the barrier, and Julian, with his companion, passed on in the direction of the city. Oribasius had taken care to arrange everything the day before, and at a short distance from the camp they turned into a deserted and dilapidated hovel where they found two slaves with horses, hidden behind the piles of rubbish. Julian, after changing his dress, mounted the steed prepared for him and directing the slaves to await their return, rode away with Oribasius, who had studied every foot of the road they were to travel. On reaching the banks of the Po they found a boat ready to start at once, and manned by four boatmen perfectly familiar with those waters. These sturdy rowers soon landed them on the other shore, and whilst they were fastening their boat to the willows which grew thick on the banks of the stream, the two companions plunged in single file into a narrow path which led through the tangled growth of alders and willows to the foot of a hill not very far from the stream. In a

retired and gloomy spot at the foot of this hill was an opening into a dark cavern, near the mouth of which sat four men, silent as ghosts, crouching over a smoky fire, and evidently watching for somebody. At the approach of the two strangers they rose and directed them to the entrance of the cave. The slight noise caused by the movements and the sound of the few words interchanged, aroused a woman who had been half-reclining, half-sitting, on some straw within. She advanced towards the new-comers and asked in a hoarse, deep voice:

"Who comes to consult the goddess of the night?"

Then examining the features of each in turn by the light of a lantern which she held up to their faces, the withered old hag asked again:

"Whom do you seek?"

Oribasius answered: "This is the young stranger who ordered the sacrifice."

"Is he one of that body of troops encamped on the other side of the river?"

Julian now spoke for himself: "Never mind that. It is enough that I am a devout worshipper of queen Diana, the protectress of this neighborhood; I venerate her priests and crave her counsel."*

* The superstitions of the inhabitants of Turin, and especially the worship of Diana, are often mentioned by St. Maximus, Bishop, in his Homilies. *Opp.* pp. 101, 139, 140, 141, 142, 656 *et passim.* But they made ample amends when the light of the Gospel had once shone upon them, by their true Christian piety,

"Grecian youth," replied the priestess, who had detected at once the Athenian student by his speech, "is that your real purpose here, and does no treacherous design lurk beneath your words? You know what stringent laws threaten the servants of the gods; but know, that should you compass in any way the death of their priestess, the divinities will not leave you unpunished."

"You need have no fear," replied Julian, "my purpose is sacred and conceals no treachery."

"Perhaps," said the priestess, "you have left behind you some fair maiden whom you love, and who has been pining away in your absence, and now you would know from the guardian goddess of the night whether she still proves true to you."

"A far more serious concern than that brings me here," answered Julian. "I shall in a few days cross the Alps to make war on the tribes of Gaul, and I crave to know from the twin sister of Apollo what fortunes await me there."

The old witch directed her attendants, who had entered with Julian, to light four funereal looking torches around the altar, which was made of sev-

and their incomparable devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. Efforts equally violent and vain have been made to rob them of this priceless possession by the false prophets known as Towianski, by the Apostles of Mormonism, a Protestant sheet called the Buona Novella, and the deluded believers in Spiritism. If these last named religionists will examine the particulars of the scene we describe, they will find that in many points the circles of the spiritists present a striking similarity with the devil-worship of the old pagan times.

eral worm-eaten boards, already falling to pieces from age. Behind the altar, in a low recess of the cave, stood a hideous statue of the goddess upon a projecting ledge of the rock. She was covered with a long veil, without sleeves, holding in her hand a bundle of serpents, and her head was crowned with a crescent.

"You cannot expect unfailing oracles if you have not first conciliated the goddess by worthy offerings," suggested the priestess.

"Well, offer up to her a dog or a hind, as she may choose."

"Blood! human blood and flames are pleasing to the infernal Hecate," said the priestess.

"Then let her have fire and blood," replied Julian.

"Sit down, young man, with reverent mind, and look steadfastly upon the goddess, whilst I invoke her divinity wandering among these branches bathed in the dews of night."

One of the attendants then placed upon the table a brasier containing dead coals; two others meanwhile removed the cloak which the priestess wore, and threw over her withered and angular shoulders the shaggy coat of some animal, whilst the fourth handed her a hazel wand bent into the shape of a crescent, upon which were carved various magical symbols. The priestess stretched forth the wand slowly, all the while rolling her eyes in the most horrible manner, and began in a low, hoarse murmur the words of incantation, and as she

chanted the mystic spell she moved several times with slow and solemn tread around the altar. Suddenly a low, flickering light began to move fitfully over the coals; soon it grew into a steady blood red flame. Then the attendants brought some vessels of wine which stood in the corners of the cave, and sprinkled it at intervals upon the flame.

"Silence!" cried the priestess, quickening her pace; "Silence! The sacred fire is rising from the realms of Pluto; the infernal goddess is at hand; sprinkle the salted meal, give generous libations to her divinity."

The attendant ministers mingled and offered the libations, quaffing full goblets of the mixture as they moved about the altar, the priestess repeating from time to time, "More, more!"

"That is not wine only," whispered Oribasius to Julian; "they have mingled with it a still more intoxicating liquor, which opens the soul to spiritual influences."

And indeed when the priestess saw that her attendants, who were dancing and whirling about her wildly, had reached a state of delirious intoxication, she suddenly exclaimed:

"Enough of fire! Now we must have blood!"

Dropping the wine jars, from which they had been supplying the flame and their goblets, the phrenzied wretches seized the cleavers used in slaying their victims, and brandishing them with fantastic motions, they continued their wild dance,

sometimes measured, now in a group, then again singly, at times leaping like demons, at others subsiding into a grotesque kind of march, and finally resuming their infernal gyrations. The woman had now taken her stand near the tripod, with hair dishevelled and eyes on fire; she waved her wand over the wild scene, seeming to direct at once and rule the furious and repulsive orgy. Weakened at last by their exertions, and overcome by the liquor, they stumbled over each other, and fell one after another to the ground, trembling, grinding their teeth, distorting their livid countenances, throwing their limbs wildly about, and rending their garments; then with the consecrated knives they fell to hacking their own bodies, cutting indiscriminately at the face, breast, arms and legs. Soon all four lay around the altar under the influence of the goddess, rolling in blood and mire, still cutting themselves furiously, writhing like energumens, and breaking out in deep groans or fierce howlings.

Julian, trembling in every fibre of his body, had recoiled into the farthest corner of the cavern during this hellish scene. But now a strong wind seemed to sweep upward from under the altar, followed by a long and fearful yell.

"The goddess! the goddess! Behold the divinity!" cried the witch in a voice not less terrible. And suddenly, a shock like an earthquake overturned the altar, and threw down the lights. Amid the confusion, Julian saw moving slowly towards

him through the darkness, a mantle of imperial purple, surrounded by a baleful light, which some unseen hand placed upon his shoulders, whilst a solitary finger wrote upon the empty air before his eyes, quick as an arrow, the words: "IN GAUL I AWAIT THEE." Then in an instant all was again dark and silent as the tomb. Neither Cæsar nor his friend could for some moments find courage or strength to stir; but the priestess aroused, and reassured them by the words: "Your sacrifice has pleased the divinity; it is seldom that our mysteries succeed so well." Then lighting a lantern, she showed them the four men still lying half-dead upon the ground.

"Until to-morrow," said she, "they will be under the influence, as we say in our art, and intoxicated by the spirit of the infernal Hecate. If you would know more, now is the time to question them."

"I have heard enough," answered Julian, who had hardly yet recovered from his terror.

"Not so," interposed Oribasius, "we must avail ourselves of the favors of the gods. I will question them in your name."

Then turning to the one who lay at his feet stretched out on his back with arms extended wide, belching forth wine and froth, he addressed him in a solemn voice:

"Where shall the new Cæsar find the road to glory?"

The breast of the prostrate man heaved con-

vulsively, and a gurgling noise was heard in his throat, which died out in these words:

"Free me from that which oppresses me."

"Where shall he find you propitious," asked Orisabius, "who now hears your voice?"

"Wherever I have a consecrated tripod; but my chosen seat is amid the rivers of the East."

"In Egypt?"

"In Egypt my brother Serapis reigns. Worship him, and seek me no more. Your career shall be glorious, and we are with you!"

"Let that suffice," interposed the priestess; "do not weary the goddess who has already shown you unwonted favor. One thing I beg of you; do not mention to Cæsar the mysteries you have witnessed. Torture and death would be the return you would make me for the divine favors which my art has won for you."

"Fear nothing," replied Julian. "Cæsar is merciful—but he shall know nothing of this."

The night was far spent when Julian and Oribasius quitted the cave, and when they reached the camp the first faint streaks of the dawn were beginning to appear in the eastern horizon. Julian was overjoyed at the unmistakable confirmation he had just received of promises given before in Greece and Asia, that he should wear the imperial purple; in his present state of feverish excitement sleep was out of the question, and he spent the early morning hours with his faithful attendant, eagerly and anxiously discussing every least detail of the

prophetic words. A hundred times he uttered the wish that he might confer for a moment with Maximus, his master in magic philosophy, who was accounted the most remarkable wonder-worker in all Asia, and the great father of the mysteries of Mithras. "If he were only here," said Julian, thinking aloud in his earnestness, "he could soon have cleared up the meaning hidden under the signs and words of the oracle." Oribasius, on the other hand, maintained that "the whole thing was as clear as need be; that certainly the imperial purple needed no interpretation; as to the relief from oppression, asked for by Hecate, it could mean nothing else than the restoration of the religion of Greece which had been crushed out by Constantine and Constantius; what gave additional force to this interpretation, was the fact that the profane vision said to have been granted to Constantine, was believed to have appeared over these very hills, on every summit of which, in former days, stood some temple, or shrine, or grove sacred to Diana, but where now the goddess was forced to hide in the dark caverns, oppressed by the cross of the Galileans, which held sovereign sway in all the land that once was her undisputed realm. The only thing that remained to be done was to seek out the favored seat of the goddess, which must be some famous temple in the East; it was his own conviction, to tell the truth, that the oracular response clearly had reference to the temple at Carrhae, in Mesopotamia. For this

shrine, situated between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, was remarkable for its regal magnificence, its immense extent, which gave it the appearance rather of a city than of a temple, and the solemn splendor of its sacrificial rites, so that thither from every country under the sun, multitudes of pilgrims were ever thronging, as to the chief sanctuary in all Asia, where Hecate would gather her votaries together."

Julian could not deny that the interpretation given to the oracle by Oribasius was most probable, if not certain, and this made him all the more eager to send at once some trusty agent to consult the oracle of the Queen of Night, at Carrhae, thus to assure himself of the destiny prepared for him by the fates.

"If Tigranes would but take upon himself this mission," said he, "it would be just the thing; but I fear that the cold hospitality to which he was treated at the palace gates when he last called on me, may have alienated him from me forever. Perhaps I shall see him no more—he may be at this very moment hastening to Brundusium, on his way to Asia; or it may be that he is trying to banish the remembrance of the insult by renewed devotion to our old Athenian studies."

"I have no fear of that," said Oribasius, "for he must know that you were rather the victim than the author of that unceremonious proceeding. Besides, you know that as a friend, he is true as steel.

The only doubt I have, is about his willingness to accept the mission."

"Why, what can he fear?" asked Julian.

"Certainly not the laws," replied Oribasius, "for it is easy enough to elude them by simply keeping the whole matter a secret; but you are aware that he is growing weak in his devotion to hellenism and magic. You remember that in Athens he was quite taken with Gregory of Nazianzum, and that other fellow from Cæsarea."

"You mean Basil."

"Exactly. And now again at Milan, he has been consorting with Hormisdas and his kind."

"Oribasius, listen; the gods inspire me to-day. I have a plan. I shall give him a sealed letter to the high-priest of the temple with the assurance that he has done me some good turns in Nicomedia,—which is quite true you know,—and that I am writing to him on business of great moment to myself. Tigranes will be perfectly ignorant of the contents of the letter, and even should he suspect them, well, after all, he is not yet a Galilean, and he would hardly refuse to do me a favor. What do you think of it?"

"Cæsar, you speak like a god! I cannot conceive a plan more likely to succeed."

"Then let me but see him. To-morrow is the day appointed, just the day before we break up the encampment."

V.

THE SECRET MISSION.

THE morning broke clear and bright; and ere the camp was fairly astir it was besieged by a swarm of peddlers and other small dealers, such as always abound in the neighborhood of military posts, who came to dispose of their wares. Some of the women brought bread, fruits, cheese and other products of the country, with sundry little casks of those favorite wines of Barbéra, Baròlo, Asti and "the hills." The soldiers were soon out of their tents and congregated in the *forum* or market-place, near the tents of the tribunes, where the booths were generally set up in the Roman camp, at which the soldiers might supply their daily wants. Julian was watching from his own tent, with a great deal of satisfaction, this gathering in friendly confusion of men from all the provinces, Belgians, Batavians, Alani and Romans, all in high spirits and expressing with true soldierlike unrestraint their enjoyment of the fresh provisions, for they were thinking of the short rations and hard biscuit that awaited them on the other side of the Alps.* The noisiest men in every

* Deinde diebus paucis . . . . comitatu parvo suscepto, kal. decembribus egressus est (Mediolano): deductusque ab Augusto adusque locum duabus columnis insignem, qui Laumellum inter-

crowd were the Gauls, and this is the testimony not of Archbishop Turpin but of a contemporary historian, who was an eye-witness of what he relates.* Some of the soldiers before drinking, religiously poured out upon the ground a few drops of wine as a libation to the tutelary deities of their respective countries, but the greater number made the sign of the cross upon the bread and the wine-flasks; then gayly pledging one another they called out to their friends in turn: "Drink to the health

jacet et Ticinum, itineribus rectis, Taurinos pervenit, ubi nuntio percellitur gravi, qui nuper in Comitatum Augusti perlatus de industria silebatur, ne parata diffluerent. Indicabat autem Coloniam Agrippinam, ampli nominis urbem in secunda Germania, pertinaci barbarorum obsidione reseratam magnis viribus et delatam. AMMIAN. MARCELLIN. XV., 8.

"A few days later, on the first of December, he left Milan, attended by a small escort; and accompanied by Augustus marched straight to a place between Laumellum and Ticinum and marked by two columns. Thence he proceeded to Turin where he learned a very alarming piece of news which had been purposely kept from him by the courtiers of Augustus, lest the expedition should fail: Cologne, an important city in Lower Germany, had been besieged by a large force of Barbarians and destroyed."

* Galli sunt omnes . . . avidi jurgiorum, et sublatius insolescentes . . . Metuendae voces complurium et minaces, placatorum juxta et irascentium; tersi tamen pari diligentia cuncti et mundi . . . Ad militandum omnis aetas aptissima . . . Vini avidum genus, etc. AMMIAN. MARCELLIN. XV., 12.

"The Gauls are all prone to quarrel, very proud and overbearing. . . . Many of them use a loud and threatening tone of voice whether angry or in good humor; but they are all very neat and clean. . . . At any age they make excellent soldiers. Very fond of wine, &c.". . .

of Augustus! Long life to Constantius! Long life to Julian!"

Whilst the youthful commander was enjoying the scene presented by the camp at the moment—a sight which he never witnessed again—one of his officers came to announce that a young stranger, who looked very much like a Greek, was waiting impatiently to be admitted to his presence. The guards had refused him entrance on the ground that it was not yet the hour for the admission of visitors; but the young man demanded instant admittance, alleging urgent business of great moment to Cæsar. Julian surmised at once that the stranger was no other than Tigranes, and without inquiring about his name gave orders that he should be allowed to pass. It was indeed Tigranes. He had come, unchanged in heart and mind towards his august friend, to bid him a last farewell, and to assure him more ardently than ever of his inviolable fidelity. But he had come besides to do him an invaluable service. Having left Milan the day after the departure of Julian, he had fallen in, at Laumellum, with Constantius, who was still there with the numerous suite which had escorted the young Cæsar thus far on his first military expedition. As he mingled freely among the courtiers, with many of whom he was more or less acquainted, he had caught many stray fragments of conversations concerning Julian, to whom he conveyed the following expressions, uttered in a tone and spirit

anything but friendly. Said one in a sneering manner:

"Our young Cæsar will have a pleasant time of it in the Rhine Provinces; the Franks have so well supplied Cologne with wild beasts that we may now save ourselves the trouble of sending for any more to Numidia. We shall soon know how he has enjoyed the games of that circus."

"What circus are you talking about?" asked another, "I certainly don't understand you."

"Don't you know the news? The Franks, by way of giving him a suitable reception, have walked into Cologne in our German provinces, and have snapped up some twenty cities—a mere trifle?"

"Cologne and twenty cities did you say?" asked Tigranes with affected unconcern; "why that will involve some pretty extensive fighting. Julian is probably leading a large army in that direction."

"No; whilst we here display that wonderful valor which is necessary when many have to fight against a few, Hercules advances against the lion, alone and with only a club; Horatius Cocles holds the bridge alone against a thousand."

"And Xerxes," said another in the same strain, "who marched into Greece with so many myriads of troops, was glad to make the best of his way out of it again alone, poor wretch!"

"By Jove!" continued the first speaker, "Augustus must have a deal of confidence in this unfledged Cæsar; this youngling who has hardly

had time yet to realize that he is no longer sitting on the benches of the schools of rhetoric."

"So much," replied the other, "that the poor fellow has not yet even heard a word about the state of affairs there. Here everybody was pouring in congratulations upon him and interpreting omens in favor of his consulship for the next year; but about the inroad of the Barbarians—not a word! However, Augustus knows what he is about."

"Well, let them settle the matter between them; I am not a military man, and don't care a snap for the Barbarians. But one thing I do believe—it was a stupid blunder to send that young fellow off at the head of an army with his own head tied up in a bag."

"We shall see what will come of it. He is scaling the Alps now, as lively as a cricket; he may find reasons for being a little less brisk when he reaches the other side."

This conversation was not lost on Tigranes. He seized his first opportunity to pass out unperceived, mounted a swift horse, and after riding all night was in the tent of Julian, as we have seen, early in the morning with a detailed account of the news he had thus picked up the evening before. It may be easily imagined that Julian was not a little concerned on hearing his friend's account. He buried his face in his hands and groaned deeply.

"I am lost!" he exclaimed bitterly. "See, my only true friend, to what a pass I am brought! Where are now all the fair omens of a brilliant

future so lately promised me? I am driven on to destruction with my eyes blindfolded. The very fate of Gallus! The same! The same!"

Tigranes tried to throw a ray of light upon the despairing grief of his patron, by suggesting that there were standing legions in Gaul.

"But they are all broken and dispersed," replied Julian, "besides, the commanders there are all taken up with the care of themselves, while those I have with me are spies and villains, all bought up by Augustus; and what with their obtrusive prying and cross-questioning, I get no peace at all."

During this last sentence Julian had started up from his seat and was pacing his tent like a fretted lion, every now and then stopping as if in deep thought, and then repeating in a tone of indignation:

"Forty cities taken by the Barbarians, and Augustus is throwing me into their jaws with a handful of men, while the legions that were burning to follow me are left to rot in their quarters."

"There is no occasion for being disheartened at that," said Oribasius, who had entered unperceived by Tigranes. "If Augustus is not with you, the gods are."

"For my part," said Tigranes, with a sneer, "I would rather have a couple of legions of well seasoned old veterans with me than two dozen of your gods with their ladies—with all due reverence to them."

"Tigranes," said Julian, seriously, "do not provoke the deities."

"My deity," answered Tigranes, "is the one only God in heaven, and after Him, Julian Cæsar, for whom I would dare fire and flames."

"And for that very reason," said Julian, who was deeply touched by the ardent attachment of his friend, "they are tearing you away from me. But this cannot be the will of the fates; we shall meet again in Gaul at some time or other. Already are some of these spies of Augustus beginning to come over to me; and I know how to manage the rest of them."

"The rising sun will always find worshippers," replied Tigranes.

"Yes," exclaimed Julian, "for their own interest; but from affection, you Tigranes, you alone, or perhaps a very few others!"

And with these words Julian broke off the conversation on this point. He invited his friend to stay and accept the hospitality of the camp, warning him at the same time to be very careful about his conversation at table; to speak only of Athens, of their former fellow-students, or of any trifles or harmless gossip, so as not to excite the suspicions of the most watchful. Meanwhile he would prepare a most important letter requiring the greatest secrecy, which he would never have intrusted to another, and which he would hand to him that night.

The remainder of the morning was taken up by

a council of war, in which the officers, who had their instructions from the Emperor, were unanimous in declaring that no campaign could be opened at such an advanced stage of the season, that the best course was to avail themselves of this period of necessary inactivity to make ample preparations for an energetic spring campaign, when they might confidently advance and display the imperial standards before the enemy. Julian, inwardly writhing with vexation and impatience, feigned great satisfaction, and praised the prudent foresight of his advisers, flattering himself the while that in proportion as he increased the distance between himself and his uncle he could bring them more completely under his control. On dismissing the officers he gave orders for the breaking up of the camp on the next morning, when the whole army should march to Segusium. Then calling for the chief secretary of the imperial staff, he directed him, with a great show of important business, to write at once to the officers in command at Matiscona, Augustodunum, Treviri,* and such other cities on their route as possessed important military depots, while he himself dictated other letters full of the most extravagant adulation to the hated Constantius.

But amid all these cares and preparations for the march of his troops, the mind of Julian was full of the important mission which he was about to

* These cities, the present Mâcon, Autun, and Treves or Triers, were, at the time of our narrative, the chief military depots in Gaul.

intrust to Tigranes; and when, at night, he had dismissed the officers, and remained alone with Oribasius, ostensibly to enjoy their usual study of philosophy, a long and earnest discussion followed concerning the letter to be sent to the high-priest of the temple at Carrhae. Oribasius, who was deeply versed in all the mysteries of theurgy, maintained that a mere letter was not sufficient for Julian's purpose, but that he must send some article of his own personal property and daily use, without which no response was ever given to a distant inquirer.

"But what can I send," asked Julian, "which would not direct suspicion against me if found upon Tigranes by the spies of Constantius?"

"You may remember," replied Oribasius, "that Serenian of Phœnicia sent to consult the goddess of Pessinus concerning his design upon the imperial purple; and on that occasion he sent a cap which he was in the habit of wearing." *

* Serenian, according to Ammianus, sent his cap by the messenger who consulted the oracle in his behalf. This circumstance is mentioned here to show that the modern spiritists have invented nothing even in this particular. It was usual at that time for the devils to require some article used by the absent person in whose name they were consulted; just as now they require a letter, an autograph, a lock of hair, or something of the kind. What is the difference? The author has personally inspected a goblet corresponding with the description above given, which was shown him by a distinguished Neapolitan archaeologist. There will be further occasion hereafter to speak about the temple of the goddess at Carrhae.

"No, no, not that!" said Julian. "You must find something else not so well known."

Oribasius ran over the various minor articles of furniture in the imperial tent, and finally hit upon a silver drinking-cup, around the bowl of which were delicately enchased representations of the successive stages in the journey from Rome to Ctesiphon in Persia.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "here is something which is safe from all danger of suspicion. Even Tigranes need not know to what use it is to be put. You can tell him that it is a gift to the high-priest, and in the letter you can explain its purport."

Julian adopted the proposition with great satisfaction. It remained however to consecrate the cup according to the magic rites. This was soon done, for Julian's medical man was as much a dealer in magic as in the healing art. Without further delay, then, he produced a little roll of parchment, on which were written many valuable recipes, and which he always carried about with him as a necessary part of his stock in trade. But this bit of writing was more valuable to him for another reason; cunningly inscribed in cypher, amid the figures with which the scroll was thickly bordered, were the words of the necessary incantations. Julian sat holding the cup in both hands, while his friend went through the required forms, consisting of various passes, very much like those of our mesmerizers, and other motions accom-

panied by certain magic formulas, until the cup was duly consecrated to the divinity of Carrhae, the goddess of the moon. The next consideration was the wording of the letter.

"It is not hard to hide a letter," said Oribasius, "and besides, Tigranes is skilful enough. But the point now is to state the case exactly, so as to leave no room for misunderstanding, and to acquaint the high-priest, at the same time, with the response already given by the goddess at Turin."

The letter was accordingly written by Oribasius, in the name of Julian, promising ample requital if the priest at Carrhae should succeed in sending by safe conveyance a favorable response. It recommended the bearer as in every way most trustworthy,—a very model of fidelity. Still, as he was not one of the initiated, caution was necessary in dealing with him, as the least breath of suspicion whispered into the ear of Constantius would jeopard not only the life of the sacrificing priest, but even that of Julian himself; for the emperor was exhausting his ingenuity in devising the severest penalties against all dealers in magic arts, and already the West was trembling at the cruelty of the punishments inflicted. The letter closed with Julian's acknowledgments of services received from the high-priest while in Nicomedia, and with fresh promises even more brilliant than the former. Oribasius read and re-read the letter several times, changed and improved parts, then wrote it anew

according to Julian's idea; and finally sealed it with as much trepidation as if he were committing to it the lives of himself and his patron.

It was not long after the conclusion of this important missive when the light and cautious step of Tigranes was heard at the entrance of the tent. He was coming to take leave of his friend and patron. Julian, who always treated his confidential friends with the greatest familiarity, received Tigranes most affectionately; he spoke of their friendship and of their common joys and labors at Athens; and having thus cautiously sounded the state of his feelings, asked him whether he felt disposed to run some risk out of love for his old friend. Tigranes protested more warmly than ever that he was ready to incur any danger in Julian's service. And in this he was sincere; for his remembrance of the treatment received from Constantius at the palace gate, his real admiration for Julian's good qualities, the persecution to which he now saw him subjected, the great dignity lately conferred upon the young Cæsar,—a dignity next to the highest then known in the world,—the true and warm friendship which Julian had always shown towards him, and the satisfaction he naturally felt at being asked to serve a Cæsar in a confidential mission—all contributed to make him willing and even desirous of undertaking any task however hazardous in his patron's interest. And so he replied at once that he was ready to risk his life and all he had besides in the service of Cæsar,

and that he would even look upon it as a great privilege to be allowed to do so.

"And indeed," said Julian, "it is actually a matter of life and death; I tremble with apprehension as I hand you this letter."

"Great God!" exclaimed Tigranes, "and is this all? To be the bearer of this letter!"

"Yes, it is all," replied Julian. "But that same little letter is of such importance that if it should happen to be found upon you, both your life and mine would pay for it—which, may the gods avert!"

"What! Is there any treason in this?" asked Tigranes. "Speak freely; for even should I feel bound to refuse you my assistance, yet will I never betray you. Tigranes can never be a traitor!"

"It is perfectly harmless," returned Julian; "it contains nothing against Augustus. To tell you the truth, it is a mere act of curiosity, or devotion, or perhaps you would call it weakness. In a word, I want a response from the oracle of the great goddess of Carrhae."

Tigranes could hardly restrain a burst of contemptuous laughter, but checking this natural impulse, he asked: "And is this all; to carry this letter, and bring back the answer secretly? You know, Cæsar, that for me Carrhae is not the other end of the earth. My own home, in Antioch, is half way there already; but even supposing that I had to swim to the Ultima Thule for it, it would be but a trifle to me. Set your mind at rest on

this point; for as soon as the deep snows of Mesopotamia have begun to melt, I shall get over those mountains so nicely that not even keen old Argus, with his hundred eyes, could catch a glimpse of me or of my shadow."

"But I forgot to say that I meant to send a cup as a gift to the high-priest," said Julian.

"Very good," replied Tigranes cheerfully, "letter, cup, and anything else you please!"

Julian handed him the letter, which he received with a significant smile; and after balancing it a moment on his hand, as if to try its weight, "Here," said he, in a tone half-playful, half-serious, "is a letter all about the imperial purple. Now why take the trouble to send all the way to the Moon at Carrhae? I take upon myself to promise it to you; if you only know how to keep off the flies, no one can take it from you. Are you not the only nephew of Constantius? Does not the blood of Constantine flow through your veins?"

"Tigranes," exclaimed Julian, "you can always read my heart through my features! I can hide nothing from *you*. You have all my confidence. But swear to me, my friend."

"My word alone is a sufficient oath," answered Tigranes, "when I pledge it to a Cæsar who claims it from me as a friend."

"But why do you decline to confirm it by an oath?" asked Julian.

"By what divinity can I swear?" asked Tigranes.

"The gods of Olympus I do not adore, the God of the Christians I do not know."

"Then swear by what you hold most sacred."

At this appeal of his friend, Tigranes raised his right hand, and said, in a tone of deep solemnity: "I swear by the God of heaven and earth; I swear by the manes of my fathers; I swear by the sacred bond of friendship, that I will faithfully fulfil your commission, and that through me it shall never be known to mortal man!"

Julian was deeply moved by the evident earnestness and sincerity of Tigranes, and clasping him in his arms, swore that his proof of his friend's fidelity was more precious to him than the coveted purple of the Cæsars. He then went on to tell him how already several times in Asia and in Greece, and even on the very day before, the gods had promised him the empire; but now that the clouds of adversity seemed to be gathering on his path, that he thought it well to consult the great oracle of Carrhae, so deeply venerated throughout the East, and that in fact the gods had even directed him to do so. "May the gods grant," he added, "that on your return you may find me in a position to reward you as you deserve, and as I would wish."

"At any rate," said Tigranes, as he took his leave, "I am satisfied that I shall find you victorious over the barbarians, master of these provinces, and freed from the trammels of court-paid espionage. I only regret that I shall not be present when you enter upon your consulship,

which will most certainly be next year. However," he concluded, "I now congratulate you with all my heart in advance."

The waning hours of the night had been spent in these important preparations, and whilst these last protestations of friendship were exchanged, the first rays of early morning were already beginning to light up the prætorium; and outside they could hear the neighing of the horses as they were led to water, the rumbling of the baggage-wagons and the bustle which always betokens the preparations for breaking up an encampment. Julian knew that his officers might come in at any moment now, in accordance with their daily custom of waiting on him early in the morning, and as he was anxious not to be found by them in private conference with a stranger, he called for horses and invited Tigranes to ride with him through the camp, which now presented a lively scene. Under-officers and legionaries were hurrying about through the morning mist busily preparing for the march; some were burnishing their arms and their shields, some were providently stowing away provisions for the route, while others with equal care replenished their flasks, constant companions in every season. The tents were fast disappearing on every side, and were then packed on the backs of sumpter-mules, while tent-mates divided among themselves the stakes which they always carried with them on the march; and so of all tne portable materials that constituted the encampment. Every-

thing was soon ready for a general movement, and as Julian rode through the various divisions he was everywhere enthusiastically greeted by the troops, who now stood in order only awaiting the signal to start.

On his return to the prætorium, he found that it was already packed upon the wagons, and the whole train was drawn up ready to follow the army as soon as it should move. The officers met him as he approached and stood respectfully awaiting his commands. Julian saluted them courteously, and pointing to the towering summits that lined the horizon, exclaimed: "See! the Alps stand before us with their glaciers, their eternal snows and biting frosts, their precipices and deep chasms. Forward, my friends, cheerfully! I shall go before you as your scout and your leader. As to what awaits us beyond, that shall be as heaven pleases!"

"Yes!" cried Tigranes, "Hercules and Hannibal, and Constantine crossed them before, and in our own day the divine Constantius has followed in their footsteps! They all found glory awaiting them on either side of those mighty hills!"

"Ah, fortunate youth," said Julian, turning to his friend, "how much easier and safer is your path to glory in Athens, beneath the porticoes of Libanius, of Himerius and Proeresius! Tell them there, that of all their lessons I have kept only that saying of Socrates, 'I know only one thing, which is, that I know nothing.' From the schools to the battle-field, from the pallium to the purple"—

"And to succeed brilliantly in both," interrupted Tigranes, "is true glory."

"Bravo!" cried the officers, applauding. "Well said! so say we too."

"Well," continued Tigranes, "I shall tell the orators of Athens and Antioch to prepare their panegyrics."

"Yes, for Augustus and for my brave fellow-soldiers here," replied Julian.

"For all," said the officers. "Long live Constantius! Long live Julian!

"Be it then for all," said Julian. "And with this happy omen, tribune, give the signal for the march."

The first sound of the trumpet was greeted by the legions with a loud cheer; the second, by louder acclamations; at the third signal, the whole army, amid the wildest enthusiasm and with deafening cheers, began to move. At first there was a surging as of a mighty mass of waters, then column after column broke away like successive billows, from the main body, with shields and lances glittering in the rays of the morning sun, eagles soaring and standards waving; and soon the whole armed mass was passing out through the prætorian gate. Tigranes gazed for a moment on the brilliant and exciting scene; then pressing to his lips the purple mantle of Julian, he turned his horse's rein and spurred away on his secret mission.

VI.

THE VETERAN.

FAVORING winds wafted Tigranes over a stormless sea to Antioch, where he had determined to spend the remainder of the winter, though his eager desire to fulfil the great commission entrusted to him by Julian had already carried him on in thought to Carrhae. At home his arrival was as unexpected as it was gladdening to the aged protector of his youthful days.

Cloudless skies, a mild temperature, a teeming soil and a majestic stream, bearing upon its bosom the heaviest ships of burden, were the gifts lavished by a partial nature on queenly Antioch. And so well had art seconded nature in the embellishment of this splendid mart, that in all the East the Roman Emperors possessed no nobler residence. Here Gallus, brother to Julian, held his court, when he was summoned by Constantius to Illyria, to meet the death prepared for him by the Emperor, who was as unfortunate in the choice of his successor as he had been cruel in the fate inflicted upon his murdered nephew. Constantius himself had not been insensible to the claims of this residence, and here he spent several winters with his army during his long and disgraceful wars with the

Persians. He had, moreover, started some vast undertakings in the roadstead of Seleucia, where he was cutting out of the solid rock a harbor for the navy and merchant marine of the ever-growing empire, whose immense traffic was no longer satisfied with the great naval stations on the Orontes. Antioch, like all the other great cities, had fallen under the influence of paganism. In the schools of literature and eloquence, the chairs were, for the most part, filled by pagans: magicians, teachers of the occult sciences, and priests of the heathen mysteries abounded, and their impious gains were greatly increased by the neighborhood of two renowned sanctuaries, to which were attached many ancient and deep-rooted superstitions. One was a temple of Jupiter, which stood on a hill overlooking the city; the other, which was within the suburbs of the city, was dedicated to Apollo. But even these temples were less faithfully attended than the theatres and hippodromes, and the people of Antioch were notorious throughout the whole East for their passion for games, comedies and the sports of the circus. The very Christians were carried away by the general enthusiasm, and sometimes took sides as furiously as the pagans in the factions between rival actors, which gave occasion to those splendid flights of indignant eloquence by which their fellow-citizen, St. John Chrysostom, tried some years later to recall them to a sense of their true position. But at the period of which we are now writing, John was a mere child, the only joy of his saintly mother.

Among the many palatial mansions of Antioch, one of the stateliest was that of an old veteran named Placidus. He was a man of strictly regular habits, often stern, and sometimes even crabbed in manner, but always kind in his dealings with inferiors, so that he was feared and yet sincerely loved by his slaves. Among these was one Armenian, who was also a Christian; his prudence and steadiness had so completely won him the confidence of his master, that the whole management of the household had gradually passed into his hands, and he was now a slave only in name. His master called him by the significant name of Pistos, faithful, in consideration of qualities which were a kind of mystery to his fellow-slaves.

The military career of Placidus had been long and glorious; and it was his great delight, just as it always has been, and always will be the delight of every true veteran, to recount the battles and the achievements of his earlier years. He generally began by the Italian campaign under Constantine, whom the enthusiastic old soldier never mentioned without the title of "Divine," and he never forgot to premise, parenthetically, that he was himself, at that time, a handsome youth of about twenty-two, graceful, vigorous, and of fair complexion. His audience on such occasions, generally consisted of the guests invited to his table, and they always came prepared to hear the detailed and authentic story of the defeat of Licinius at Adrianople. Now it was a noticeable fact that Placidus never went

into particulars about his campaigns under Constantius, and that he was especially reticent concerning the march into Persia, where he had commanded for a whole year, and had spent several more as a prisoner. Of course each one interpreted this silence according to his own views; some thought it the mere forgetfulness of an old man, others attributed it to his military pride; and indeed Placidus was heartily ashamed of those Persian campaigns in which Constantius, who made such a gallant show when he fought against unarmed priests, won nothing by his notable incapacity but some very hard knocks and disgrace for the Roman name. But there was another thought, far more serious than this, which tended to make the remembrance of Persia ungrateful to the old veteran, especially now that he felt, day by day, the weakness of old age creeping over his frame, and all those other indications which tell of approaching dissolution. Placidus was a Christian; he had not wavered in the open profession of his faith, even in the camps. But while a captive of the Persians, he concealed his religion at court, in order to retain the favor of the king, who had brought him there and who had showed him every mark of distinguished honor. From that time forth he had been seen no more among the Christians when they met for divine worship; and though he often felt a strong impulse moving him to return to his former state by a public reconciliation with the Church, he had put off the act from

day to day and from year to year, until now he found himself close to the brink of the grave with that sacred duty still undone.

There were at this time in Antioch two holy widows, Publia and Anthusa, well known to all the Christians. Publia, who was well advanced in years, had been made a deaconess and directress of a celebrated monastery of virgins consecrated to God. Anthusa was young, not much more than twenty, possessed of great wealth and every personal attraction. The death of her husband, Secundus, who had been a distinguished officer and an intimate friend of Placidus, left her with one little son, named John, better known at a later day by the glorious historical name of Chrysostom, a surname won by his marvellous eloquence. These two holy women were very desirous to bring back Placidus to the path of duty, and, under the pretext of not leaving their aged friend altogether to the care of slaves, they attended to him in his declining years with the most patient assiduity, lavishing upon him the most delicate attentions, and seeking always a favorable opportunity for effecting their main purpose. The generous endeavors of these pious matrons was blessed with the desired success, and Anthusa one day found the old man in such dispositions that she saw the occasion offered to her of introducing the topic she had so much at heart.

"Tribune," said the holy widow, "it is quite commonly believed among the Christians here

that you were baptized in your infancy; and everybody is surprised at not seeing you, since your residence in Antioch, attend any of the meetings of the faithful or show any sign of Christian piety."

"I cannot," replied Placidus, "I cannot; there is an obstacle in the way."

"And what is the great obstacle, if I may ask the question?" inquired Anthusa.

"It is very serious, very serious. Yes, it is an insurmountable one," said the veteran.

"But in your present declining state of health," urged the pious lady, "it would be well to secure your eternal safety, even though it should cost some trouble."

Placidus heaved a deep sigh, and turning to Anthusa, exclaimed: "Ah! holy lady, you have passed the years of your life in doing good. You have been an example to young maidens, the envy of matrons, now you are a model for holy widows and the admiration of the whole city. To you, then, it seems easy to be virtuous. But you mistake. No; it is too hard for an old sinner to be restored to the congregation of the faithful. And then to whom can I go? I have no confidence at all in this new bishop forced upon us by the emperor. I am a son of St. Peter; I was baptized at his tomb. I hold the faith of Nice; I adore Jesus Christ, true God, equal to the Father and to the Holy Ghost, and I cannot hold any communion with an Arian. If I have been

weak in faith, still I cannot and will not be a heretic!"

Anthusa was overjoyed at this clear and vigorous profession of faith, which was so much more than she had expected. She foresaw that it would not be hard now to gain the desired end; and so with kind and encouraging words she urged him to overcome the weak fear of a momentary humiliation, assuring him also that he need not have recourse to the Arian bishop.

"And is there another bishop besides the Emperor's?" asked the old man, who knew little or nothing about details in Church matters.

"No," replied Anthusa, "but Paulinus is our pastor. We are in communion with Bishop Athanasius of Alexandria, and with the Bishop of Rome."

"And who is this Paulinus?"

"He is a zealous priest, who supplies the place of the bishop until we can have a Catholic Bishop."

Whilst these first steps were being taken towards effecting a reconciliation between Placidus and the Church of his baptism, Tigranes was entering the city of Antioch. His unexpected arrival in the home of his youth startled the household. One of the slaves hastened to the apartment of Placidus with the news, "Tigranes has come!"

"Tigranes!" exclaimed the old Tribune, in astonishment: "How can that be?"

"It is true. He is in the atrium—here he is!"

In fact, Tigranes was crossing the threshold of the room. In a moment more his arms were about the neck of his aged father, who pressed his beloved Tigranes to his heart, unable to utter more than a few indistinct words for very joy.

It was not easy for Tigranes to give account for his sudden arrival. The secret mission, which was the only real cause of his journey, was an inviolable secret; and no other motive seemed to him quite sufficient. Still, his quick-witted ingenuity found means to explain his coming. Besides, old Placidus was so much pleased at the thought of having Tigranes by his side in these last days of his life, that he was disposed to be quite easily satisfied with any reasons that might be advanced for this unexpected return. But this difficulty overcome, Tigranes found himself very much perplexed about his mission to the high-priest at Carrhae. He felt that such a transaction was not at all compatible with the earnest desire he had for some time felt of receiving baptism, a desire which had been much strengthened by the words of Basil and Gregory, with whom he had sojourned at Athens on his homeward journey. His embarrassment was increased by the critical condition of Placidus, by the earnest admonitions of the now penitent old man, and especially by an impressive ceremony at which he requested Tigranes to be present. In accordance with the arrangements already made, the holy Priest Paulinus came with the deacons and several of the faithful of Antioch,

to receive back into the arms of the Church the repentant tribune. A servant was sent to summon Tigranes.

"Sir, your father desires your presence."

"Has he grown worse?" asked Tigranes, anxiously.

"No, sir, but there is a stranger with him, a man of grave countenance. They have been in close consultation for some time; perhaps he wishes you to witness the signing of his will."

This unexpected summons, and the mention of the will, startled Tigranes, and he hastened with feelings of apprehension to his father's apartment. On entering the room he saw that his father was already surrounded by several persons unknown to him; close at the side of the sick bed sat a man of venerable aspect, and near him two others of like appearance and dress. They all wore tunics of a sober hue, over which was thrown a poor cloak; their hair was cut close, but they wore full beards.* Tigranes knew afterwards that these strangers were the Priest Paulinus and two deacons. Several Christian citizens of Antioch stood around, among them Flavian, afterwards Patriarch of Antioch, and at the foot of the bed knelt the two holy widows, Publia and Anthusa, both modestly veiled, and

* Such was the dress of the clergy of that period—vid. THOMASSIN, *vetus et nova eccl. discipl.*, t. I. p. 335. Ed. Lucca, 1728. The same author speaks, t. III. p. 622, of the priests who, in Antioch, received back those who had fallen from the faith, though this solemn duty was generally reserved to the bishops.

interested spectators of the solemn scene due to their pious exertions. As soon as Tigranes entered, Placidus addressed him in a tone of deep emotion:

"My son, you see me now on the extreme verge of life. At such a moment men do not deceive themselves; and now, whilst in the full possession of my faculties, I have called you and these, my brethren, to witness the solemn act I am about to perform. I trust that the remembrance of this hour may remain with you through life for your own greatest advantage. You know that my career has been long and, in the eyes of the world, not without glory. My military honors I hold from the noblest of the Cæsars, my friends have been always among the most illustrious of my fellow-citizens; and even in the disastrous moment of my captivity in Persia, fortune still smiled on me, for the Great King summoned me to his Court and loaded me with favors. Now remember what I say to you. Of all this great prosperity not one memory gives me any comfort now, my only hope and joy is the remembrance of my baptism. Would to God that I had been more faithful to its obligations in my profession and in my actions! But since I have, through my own guilt, shamefully failed in my duty, I desire now to make an humble confession of my fault in the sight of my brethren, and especially before you, whom I should have more faithfully trained up by word and example in the Christian faith. Yet I

feel the assurance that your years, your mature understanding and your deep studies, will enable you to understand all that I would, but cannot, say to you now."

Tigranes was too deeply moved to speak. It was as if scales had fallen from his eyes; he had never known before that Placidus was a baptized Christian. Placidus, turning to the priest, continued:

"Minister of God, I, Placidus, in all humility confess to the Church and to my brethren that I have deeply sinned in preferring the honors of the world before my duty to God and to my religion; for many years, while in Persia, I abstained altogether from taking any part in the sacred rites of the Christians. I would wish now to appear in mourning garb among the other penitents at the doors of the Basilica, to make public reparation for my crime; but since I am prevented by sickness from carrying out my desire, I confess my sin before these representatives of the faithful, and implore the indulgence of God and of the Church. Minister of forgiveness, restore me to favor with Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; and you, brethren, pray to God for me."

Then Paulinus with his deacons drew near to the couch of the penitent, and the priest, bending over him with a look of mingled solemnity, and yet of great mildness, spoke slowly and distinctly: "My brother, the grace of God moves you to penance; blessed be His infinite goodness. Therefore I

who, though unworthy, exercise the office of dispenser of His heavenly mercies, do now receive you back in His Name into the arms of Holy Church. But yet remember that if the merciful Redeemer allowed Himself to be moved to forgiveness of the repentant Magdalen, she had before washed His adorable feet with her tears. You too, then, shall enjoy the pardon and peace of the Redeemer, if you have wept over your sins."

All were deeply moved by the scene and by the words of the priest; every eye was wet, and even Paulinus wiped the tears which flowed down his cheeks. Tigranes looked like a man rapt out of himself. Placidus extended his arms on the pillow in the form of a cross, and with streaming eyes replied: "Just and merciful is your sentence, my father. Do not forsake me in this moment of great peril; let me see you by my side, that I may open my heart to you and confess to you my iniquities in the bitterness of my soul. And now, until I can hope to receive the great happiness of full absolution at your hands, as a sign of the sincere sorrow to which I devote myself for the future, I wish to do penance in sackcloth and ashes."

Then taking a handful of ashes from a dish which he had ordered to be brought to his bedside, he scattered it over his gray hairs, and on his face and breast. Anthusa helped him to cover his head with a cloth of coarse stuff. The priest laid his hand upon the sick man while the deacon pronounced the formula, "Penitents, bow your heads;"

after which Paulinus pronounced the form of prayer by which Placidus was admitted into the number of the Penitents. Then with an expression of still greater mildness he embraced Placidus and added: "Brother, take heart. The Church does not pronounce the words of pardon at once, because she wishes to pardon more securely; but she is not reluctant, much less implacable. She is indeed a most tender mother, and so, following the merciful spirit of the sacred Canons, I shall not measure your penance by the length of the time, but by the deep sincerity of its expression in you, especially should your sickness place you soon in immediate danger, which may God avert! Meanwhile I shall remember you particularly at the Holy Sacrifice in the prayer for the Penitents."

Placidus found new life and strength in the comforting promises of the holy priest. During the following days he held long conversations on spiritual things, either with Paulinus or with some of the brethren who visited him frequently, but especially with the pious widows who had been so instrumental in procuring for him his present happiness. He sent large alms to be distributed to the poor and to the needy widows. He often envied those fortunate penitents who could prostrate themselves at the doors of the churches to confess their sins with greater humiliation, and ask the common prayers of the faithful; still he did not neglect to do what he could, and so he strove to draw down the divine mercy by deep contrition

of heart, by sacramental confession and by showing every sign of a perfect amendment. And now especially did he strive to discharge towards Tigranes every duty of a Christian parent. Feeling that he had too often given him occasion of scandal by his profane life, he took every opportunity now of repairing the evil as far as he could, by often speaking with the youth on religious subjects, sometimes directly and urgently, at others in a more indirect and insinuating way, but on every occasion he managed to bring the conversation to that point, and always wound up by urging Tigranes to enroll himself at once among the Catechumens.

One evening, Tigranes was setting in order a suit of armor which hung upon the wall opposite to the couch of Placidus. It consisted of a coat of mail, supported by a lance which passed through it and held it upright; the whole was surmounted by a bright helmet. On one side were two javelins, crossed over the sword; on the other, the buckler. Placidus asked him to burnish the circlet of fine gold which ran round the top of the helmet, just below the crest. Tigranes observed that the crest consisted of a cross, surrounded by rays, and under it the letters, I. H. V.

What is the meaning of these letters?" asked Tigranes.

"I thought that you knew that," answered Placidus. "It is the Latin inscription of the great victory of the divine Constantine; it was first inscribed on our armor when we were marching on

Rome, against the terrible Maxentius. Then each one wrote or scratched it as best he could, but as soon as we entered the city I had mine engraved, as you see it there, by a skilful artist. It will be a memorial of your father."

"Now I remember that I have heard you speak of it before. If I remember well, it means, '*In hoc vince.*'* Am I right?"

At the mention of the inscription, a spark of the old fire flashed forth for a moment from the failing eyes of the aged veteran. Raising his withered arm from the pillow on which it rested, he pointed upward with his finger as if he saw again the glorious vision in the glowing sky, and exclaimed: "'*In hoc vince.*' The cross! the cross! See the triumphal sign that overcomes the profane standards of pagan antiquity! With this sign the divine Constantine led us on to certain victory! Oh, it was glorious to march to the strife behind this standard!"

A little of his old pagan malice was stirred up in the breast of Tigranes by the enthusiasm of his father, and he could not help interposing:

"And yet it did not always conquer. It seems to me that our Persian campaign was not too glorious."

"But who bore the Labarum in those encounters?" cried the old tribune, with a burst of lofty indignation. "We all know too well. God did

* In this conquer.

not promise miraculous victories under this standard forever! And in Persia, it was not victory that played false to the Labarum of Constantine, but the Labarum of Constantine was false to victory. For he was threatening the unbelievers with the cross, who was himself a worse enemy to the Crucified than the unbelievers themselves."

"And yet," suggested Tigranes, who did not fully understand the import of the old man's words, "Constantius is a Christian!"

"A Christian!" continued Placidus with the same animation, "Constantius a Christian! Yes, just as Scipio was called the African from the country which he had ruined! You do not yet understand what an evil thing it is to countenance the cursed heresy of the Arians. They are the worst enemies of Jesus Christ who deny Him divine worship, thus setting up paganism again in the midst of Christianity. I declare to you that rather than have any part with one of those blasphemers, I should have preferred to die without any formal act of reconciliation with the Church, at least through their hands, and I should have relied for pardon on the mercy of the Lord who searches all hearts. But bear well in mind what I now say to you, my dear Tigranes, Constantius will meet with a wretched and untimely fate, and that before very long. Every Emperor who raised his hand against the Church of Christ has perished miserably, leaving a name covered with infamy and contempt. Would you know how many of those

vipers, clothed in the imperial purple, I have seen crushed to the earth, and still venting their rage against the crucified God? May that meek and merciful Saviour have mercy on me, now that I confess my fault and pray for pardon; for I have seen His dreadful vengeance fall on some eighteen of those unhappy wretches. It is not an old legend; I saw it all with my own eyes. I saw Diocletian and Maximian Herculeus, Severus and Galerius, Maximinus, Maxentius and Licinius, with all their jewelled diadems, and their vast armies, which covered the land and the sea, all end miserably—one by the halter, another by poison, a third rotting alive and breeding vermin, like a corpse. And their queens, too, I have seen starving and begging for the poorest necessaries of life, murdered by the dagger in the hands of their own offspring, and even here, in this very Antioch, hurled through the palace windows into the Orontes. I know very well that our faithless Emperor proclaims everywhere that the bishops abuse his clemency, that the Bishop of Rome refuses to hear his friendly counsels. Yes, it is the old story of the wolf and the lamb. But many wolves that would have torn that lamb, have left their teeth behind. 'That was a mere chance,' say the pagan sophists. I know it; but I know, too, that though the vengeance may seem to be long coming, yet come it will with a dreadful certainty. And I tell you, too, that the wrath of God has long been gathering over that traitor's head!"

Tigranes trembled lest some listener might hear those stern threats uttered against the Emperor, and he tried to turn the current of the old man's thoughts. But all in vain; Placidus, weakened and failing as he was, seemed inspired, and his eyes flashed with an unnatural brightness: "Why," he continued in the same strain, "why does not some worthy scion of the great Constantine rise up now to heal the wounds inflicted upon the Church by this blinded Emperor! Julian, I trust, Julian will be the man. He who, with his own hand here, built up the temple of St. Mamas, here he prayed, here he adored Christ!". . . .

Tigranes involuntarily shook his head with a look which said, more plainly than words could have done, "It may be, but it is not probable."

"What!" exclaimed Placidus, who had read the thought; "do you mean that Julian is no better than Constantius? Alas, it may be true; and the chalice of the divine wrath, as our Scriptures say, is in the hands of the Almighty; it is not yet drained to the dregs, and all they who work iniquity on the face of the earth shall yet drink of it. If Julian has betrayed the faith of his fathers, he may never wear that proud purple of which he is so greedy, or if he does, it will be his own destruction, for God will strip it from his shoulders to the last shred, and he may be the last of his degenerate line!"

It was evident to all that since the day on which he had been ranked among the Penitents, Placidus

was a changed man. The weakness of old age seemed to have disappeared; and now with his mind fixed solely on heaven and on the truths of religion, he seemed to scan the whole field within that vast horizon, and to contemplate it all with a free and fearless mind as when in the first fervor of his baptism. Tigranes watched with increasing wonder this renewal of life, and insensibly his filial affection grew into a deep veneration. But he saw that this long and vehement outburst of zeal and indignation had weakened Placidus, and drawing near to the couch, he kindly pressed the hands of his aged father in his own, and urged him to seek the repose he needed.

"True," answered Placidus. "But if Paulinus or Anthusa should call in the morning, let them come to me at once, they are a source of great consolation to me."

Then settling the sackcloth upon the couch, he sunk back upon his pillow to seek the much needed repose.

VII.

THE SACRED LITURGY.

SPIRITLESS and degenerate indeed must be he who is not impressed by the harmony, the grandeur, the more than earthly majesty of that outward worship which the Church of Christ is ever offering up to the one true God. It is true that different periods have brought in certain varieties in the mere disciplinary details; but that essential character of divine institution, the spirit of mysterious symbolism which gives it soul and life, has stood unchanged amid the ceaseless changes of passing centuries. And the ceremonial of the church to-day still breathes the divine fragrance of those primitive rites, from which it is for the most part derived. The Sacred Liturgy passed indeed from the upper chamber in Jerusalem to the abodes of the faithful, shrouded its hidden splendors in the catacombs, blazed out anew with solemn grandeur in the Basilicas, wandered forth amid camps and battle-fields under the standards of Constantine, flourished under the minarets of Byzantium, adored in hushed recollection beneath the silent domes of the Arabs, the Lombards and the Northern Barbarians, and developed the great resources of its imposing ritual in

the shadow of those matchless temples reared by Brunelleschi and Michael Angelo; and from all these varieties of condition and surroundings it borrowed new graces, shone with an ever-brightening lustre, losing, the while, nothing of that native beauty by which it delights the gaze of the unlearned, and subdues the restless mind of the wonder-stricken philosopher.

Whilst the preparations were going on in the dwelling of Placidus for the celebration of the Sacred Mysteries, Tigranes, who was beginning to doubt that he should be able to fulfil his commission as soon as he had expected, withdrew to his room and wrote to Julian:

"Tigranes to Julian Cæsar, Greeting: Dear to my heart as is Antioch, my home, yet it cannot repay me for the great honor and happiness of living in familiar intercourse with you. But there is no release from the decrees of Heaven which have doomed me to lose for a time the aid of a powerful protector, and you, Cæsar, the services of a most faithful servant upon whom you have, with so much condescension, bestowed the name of friend. I had thought to dispel the effects of this deep affliction by following the example of the great Ithacan, '*Qui mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes*,' when my father was seized by a grievous illness which ties me to his bedside with the bonds of filial piety. True, this is not hard to me, though I certainly feel it more under the present circumstances, since I was already on the wing

to far-off lands. But I hope, nay I am certain, that the great pleasure of carrying out your wishes will be granted me before long.

"The kind words which you sent by me to your admirers in Athens, filled them with delight; but they were not an unmixed joy to me, for they opened anew the wound I have been bearing in my heart. Every tongue was heaping benedictions upon the august Constantius for his choice, from which all augured new glory for him and prosperity for the Empire. Ah! why is the common joy mingled, for me, with so much bitterness. And yet I will not so soon give up all hope.

"May the God of Heaven prosper your arms, and, under your auspices, may the good fortune of the Roman Republic ever increase."

He read the letter two or three times over, carefully weighing every syllable, to assure himself that it would inform Julian of the obstacle which had stayed the execution of his commission, without at the same time awakening the least suspicion, should it chance to fall into the hands of Constantius. The result of this minute scrutiny was a change in the last lines of the letter, which he closed thus: "May the God of Heaven prosper the Roman arms under your conduct, and under the auspices of Constantius Augustus may the glory of the Republic increase forever." And when he had affixed the date, "Antioch, on the Kalends of March, in the Consulship of Constan-

tius Augustus and of Julian Cæsar," the letter was ready to be sent to its destination.

Placidus, who had in the meantime been solemnly reconciled to the Church, had not the least suspicion of this secret correspondence. The whole of this blessed day of his restoration to the fold of Christ he spent in thanksgiving, prayer and preparation for the great favor of Holy Communion promised him for the next day. Perhaps he felt a presentiment that that day was to be the last of his career. At times he would call Tigranes, and bid him read slowly from a volume of the Holy Gospels, which lay always by his pillow, St. John's narrative of the passion of Christ, or the sixth chapter of the same Gospel, in which are recorded the glorious promises of immortality reserved for those who partake of the Bread which is Christ. Meanwhile the holy deaconesses, Publia and Anthusa, with the help of Pistos and some other Christian servants of the house, were making due preparations for the sacred mysteries which were to be celebrated there on the morrow.

In the room adjoining that in which Placidus lay, they prepared a temporary altar consisting of a costly table of ebony beautifully inlaid with gold, the most precious article of furniture in the rich mansion of Placidus. The old man, wishing to make the room look as much as possible like a church, sent for some movable columns from his country-house, and had them set up on either side of the table. From the capitals of those which

stood at the corners were suspended rich hangings, meeting in the centre above the altar, after the manner of the canopies usually erected in the sanctuaries of the Basilicas. Placidus could easily follow the movements of those engaged in this pious work, for the altar had been placed in such a position as to be wholly within sight of the sick bed. Anthusa spread upon the altar a costly covering of silken stuff richly embroidered with gold and gems—a gift which she had prepared with long and pious labor for the church dedicated to St. Mamas. Above the altar, within the canopy, the holy deaconness suspended by a silver chain a beautifully wrought silver dove with outstretched wings of fine gold, a symbol of the Holy Ghost presiding over the sacrifice of infinite love—this was the ciborium in the early ages of the Church. Nor did they forget the candelabras, the perfumed tapers, the pitcher and ewer, the cruets of warm and cold water, the finger towels, the vestments —in a word, everything necessary for the proper carrying out of the Sacred Liturgy.

When all was ready, the deacons came with the sacred vessels which they set in order upon the credence. The pious ladies begged to be allowed the privilege of kissing the foot of the chalice, on which was a beautifully enamelled representation of the Good Shepherd bringing home in his bosom the strayed sheep—Placidus also asked and obtained the same favor. Then the holy widows spent some time in conversation with the sick man, lead-

ing his mind to thoughts becoming one who was about to receive the holy Viaticum. Anthusa took her leave first, because she was to prepare the bread for the Holy Sacrifice, and she wished with pious care to attend to the least details of the preparation. She kneaded in a small silver kneading-trough some handfuls of the finest flour, made a small white almond-shape loaf and stamped upon it the figure of a cross, surrounded by some characters conveying the idea, "Jesus Christ conquers."

"I shall see to the wine for the sacrifice," said Placidus; "I have several flasks of old wine from the hills of Palestine, and the thought of those sacred places will help my devotion." And so everything was prepared.

Tigranes had watched with great curiosity every step of these preparations, and he had promised himself the satisfaction of being present the next day at the celebration of the Christian Mysteries, when to his great disappointment his father summoned him, and with great seriousness of expression, said to him:

"My son, it is not possible that you should be present at the most Sacred Mysteries with the initiated. You may, if you wish, remain during the first part, but when you see the faithful prostrate themselves in secret prayer, then withdraw. You will direct Pistos and the other Christian slaves, in my name, to be punctual in attending; but not you. You are still profane."

And as he spoke these words a tear glistened in the eye of the old man. Tigranes said nothing at the time, but he began at once to form various plans in his own mind for satisfying his curiosity, without at the same time troubling his father's conscience. He noticed that the altar had been placed in a hall into which opened several other rooms besides his father's; he determined, therefore, to take up his position in one of them, and to contrive some means by which he might comfortably view the whole solemnity without being seen himself. He quieted his conscience by the thought that there could certainly be no harm in this clandestine proceeding, since he was looking on, not to violate the mysteries, but to satisfy a curiosity more pious, after all, than impious. "And then," he reasoned, "if I am one day to be a Christian, is it not well that I should first have some notion of their mysteries?"

In the morning, when the time approached for the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, Tigranes withdrew, leaving his father to the care of Paulinus, who had been his companion in watching during the night by the sick bed. He made his way unperceived into an adjoining apartment, secured the door behind him carefully and closed the window curtains to darken the room as much as possible. Then cautiously approaching the door which opened into the temporary chapel, he drew it slightly towards himself, carefully and noiselessly, and through the folds of the curtain which

hung within, he had a full view of all the proceedings on the other side. He saw that the faithful were coming in one by one, taking their places in silent recollection around the sanctuary, across which were drawn two curtains, concealing the altar from view. He missed Anthusa, but soon perceived through the door of his father's room that she was at the side of the old man's couch. At this moment the voice of a deacon was heard pronouncing the usual formula: "Let all the faithful present kneel. Let us offer up our prayers to God through His Christ; let us all earnestly pray to Him through His Christ." All the faithful prostrated themselves in what was called the Secret Prayer, in which each one asked pardon of God for his own sins. Several approached Paulinus, and kneeling at his feet, confessed such faults as troubled their consciences; after receiving absolution, they returned to their prayers. The silent prayer was followed by the acclamations. The deacon uttered aloud a form of prayer, first for the Church scattered over the face of the earth, then for the parishes, the secular clergy, for the monks, for the sick, for the benefactors of the Church, for the neophytes, for all heretics and unbelievers, and in fine, for all the faithful throughout the world. Tigranes was much impressed by the prayers for the unbelievers. "That is for me," he said within himself; "let us see whether or not it will be granted." At the end of each separate invocation the people all answered: "Show unto us Thy

mercy, O Lord." "And now, Brethen, let us with renewed earnestness recommend ourselves to the living God, through the mediation of His Christ." And the whole assembly prayed for a time with new fervor and devotion. Then Paulinus stood up and recited a collect or prayer, in which he offered up together the collected petitions of all. The faithful all answered, "Amen." "The peace of the Lord be with you all," said Paulinus. "And with thy spirit," replied the faithful. Then the deacon gave the signal for the interchange of the Kiss of Peace, whereupon each one of the men turned to his neighbor and kissed him upon the forehead in token of perfect charity, the same ceremony being performed by the women among themselves, and all without any distinction of bond or free. Meanwhile the attendant ministers exchanged the same symbolic embrace with the priest at the altar. Tigranes could not repress a feeling of deep emotion when he saw the faithful pressing around his father's couch and saluting the old man with the affectionate embrace of Christian love.

This pious ceremony was followed by the announcement of the deacon that now the offerings should be made for the altar, when immediately the faithful advanced, one by one, and laid their alms upon a silver tray prepared for the purpose. Anthusa, brought as her gift, wrapped in a towel of fine linen, the little loaf of bread which she had herself prepared that morning; then offering also

the wine for the Sacrifice, she whispered to the minister who attended to the receiving of the gifts, "This is the offering of Placidus." Together with the wine was a purse full of gold pieces, in which was found a paper with the words: "For the poor, for the consecrated virgins and holy widows, that they may pray for the sinner Placidus." Some had offered vases of incense and other such things as were useful for the altar service, while one poor man had brought a crust of home-made bread. The assistant ministers, having gathered all into a basket, placed it upon the altar, and Paulinus recited the usual prayer for the oblation of the consecrated offerings. The sub-deacon next poured water upon the hands of the priest who recited, meanwhile, the words of the psalm: "I will wash my hands among the innocent; and will compass Thy altar, O Lord." The ministers who were to assist in the sacrifice then likewise washed their hands; the faithful had purified themselves with the lustral water before entering. The deacon, having placed upon the altar the bread and wine, was holding over them the veil which had been used to cover the chalice. Anthusa, perceiving that the deacon was gently waving the veil from time to time, as if to keep off from the sacred offering any insect or grain of dust that might be borne over the altar, modestly drew the attention of the nearest acolyte to a fan of peacock feathers which she had placed near at hand for that very purpose. And now the time had come for beginning that

part of the divine rite which was to be secret. Then one of the assistant clergy turned toward the people and made the usual proclamation:

"Let the catechumens and the penitents depart!" These words filled the heart of Placidus with a holy joy. "Now," he thought, "I shall no longer be rejected." "Let all unbelievers and heretics depart," continued the deacon. "Mothers, keep your children at your side. Let no one approach with hatred or hypocrisy in his soul. Let us watch in the presence of the Lord; let us offer the Sacred Host with fear and trembling."

Not a breath was heard in the hall while the priest uttered the words of the angelic hymn, which the faithful accompanied in their hearts; but at the Trisagion, "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Hosts," all recited the words aloud as if to mingle their voices with the strains of the Heavenly Choirs. At this point the curtains of the sanctuary were closed, and the faithful seemed more than ever absorbed in devotion before the tremendous mystery which was about to be consummated. When the priest pronounced in tones trembling with awe and reverence the solemn words of the consecration, the whole assembly, with one voice, made a public act of faith: "We believe!"

The curtains were then drawn aside; but already the Sacred Species had been carefully covered with the silken pall, and kneeling before them they invoked aloud the Saints and Martyrs of Jesus Christ, they prayed for the Church and for

the Empire, and for eternal rest to the souls of the faithful departed, the whole pious supplication ending with the solemn doxology: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.—Amen." Then came the solemn moment of the communion. The priest, having recited the Lord's Prayer, broke the Heavenly Bread, and turning round to the faithful, held it up for their adoration; but before giving communion to the people the priest said aloud, "Holy things are for the holy," to which they answered, "One alone is the Holy One, Jesus Christ, our Lord, in the glory of God the Father. Blessed be His holy Name forever.—Amen. Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth, good-will to men. Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. He hath appeared even unto us; Hosanna in the highest!"

The deacons and the other sacred ministers now approached to partake of the adorable and tremendous sacrifice. "The Body of the Lord," said the priest. "Amen," answered the communicant, receiving his portion of the Sacred Banquet in his extended hand; each one also received a drop from the consecrated chalice which the priest conveyed to him with the words, "The blood of Jesus Christ." "Amen," was the answer. First after the clergy came Anthusa and Publia, who, as consecrated widows, had, according to the primi-

tive ritual, precedence among the laity. Each one of the faithful, as he approached the sanctuary, first bent the knee in adoration, then standing erect at a respectful distance, extended the right hand supported by the left, and received with great reverence the Heavenly Bread; after looking upon it for a brief moment with loving and reverential devotion, they administered the communion to themselves, after which they partook of the consecrated chalice held by the priest, always pronouncing the "Amen," before they returned to their places. When Anthusa had received, she placed her little son before her, and brushing back the locks from his fair brow, whispered in his ear, "My child, join your little hands and open your mouth; now our Lord Jesus is going to come to you." The innocent little angel immediately assumed a devout posture, extended his tongue upon his parted lips, and received from the hand of the priest a fragment of the Sacred Bread dipped in the chalice. A young girl from a distant province happened to be present, and as she approached she extended her hand, covered according to the custom of her country, with a linen cloth richly edged with gold. But the deacon directed her to dispense with it, as nothing was a more worthy receptacle for the Holy Eucharist than the body of a Christian, consecrated by the sacraments and the living temple of the Holy Ghost. When all the others had in like manner received the Bread of Life, Placidus also

partook of the Sacred Banquet. He seemed to be so completely rapt by the great happiness which filled his soul as not to see or feel anything else, but to be already enjoying a foretaste of heavenly bliss; having touched his lips, still wet with the divine blood, with the tips of his fingers, he applied them thus moistened to his forehead, his ears and his eyes, as the rest of the faithful had done, but his words were different: "Now, my eyes, close forever in peace; to-day I have seen my God, I ask for no more on earth." One of the faithful present, who had to set out next day on a long journey by sea, broke the bread given him by the priest and reserved a portion of it in a small silver pyx kept for this purpose, which he then wrapped in a richly wrought scarf of gold cloth and placed reverently in his bosom. The faithful remained absorbed in prayer and thanksgiving long after the priest's blessing and the parting salutation, "*Ite in Pace*," had been given, so deep and fervent was their gratitude to God who had restored them their lost brother; and thus all remained to praise the infinite goodness of the Lord, and to commend to His care the last hours of the sick man. Each one, before departing, stopped to say a word of kindness to Placidus, who was too much absorbed in spiritual joy and happiness to answer by words, he only smiled his thanks. And thus he spent the remainder of that day. Tigranes attributed this deep quiet to exhaustion, a necessary consequence, he thought, of the excitement of the morning.

But he was disabused when, in the evening, long after all guests and visitors had taken their leave, he found himself alone with his father.

VIII.

THE SECRET.

PLACIDUS lived but a short time after receiving the holy Viaticum, and his death was a peaceful falling asleep in the Lord. But who was Placidus? He was the son of a celebrated goldsmith of Turin, and had been brought up a Pagan; but he became a Christian after the miraculous apparition of the cross to Constantine, under whom he was serving his term of military service at the time, and he had the honor of being chosen among the fifty whom the emperor appointed as a special guard to the Labarum during the time of battle. After attaining the highest military ranks as a reward for his distinguished valor in various engagements, he fought through most of the Persian campaigns under Constantius, until he was at last made prisoner and taken to Ctesiphon, then the capital of the Persian king. At his very entrance into the great city, he witnessed a spectacle which did not help to raise his

spirits. An aged man, named Gustahazade, who had grown gray in the service of his royal master, whose foster-father he was, and who had enjoyed the king's almost intimate friendship, was being dragged through the streets to execution. The criers went before him proclaiming to the gathering crowds the royal sentence condemning the old man to death because he obstinately refused to worship the sun. This happened on a Holy Thursday; on the very next day, the tyrant ordered the arrest of the bishop Simeon, the great St. Simeon Bar Saboe, who had been present in the Nicene Council as Metropolitan of Seleucia and Ctesiphon. The venerable prelate was likewise condemned to decapitation, with one hundred other ministers of the altar. These bloody scenes were followed by the destruction of churches, the burning of monasteries, and such a fierce persecution of Christianity, that the faithful were obliged to meet for divine worship in the darkness of night, and far from human habitations. Placidus, for the first time, showed a cowardly weakness; he had not the courage to take part with his persecuted brethren, but lived like a heathen, only that he never bent the knee to any of the idols of the Persians. A fall so inexcusable before God, and so fruitful of bitter remorse and tears to himself in after life, when he returned to the path of duty, was, however, in the merciful designs of Providence, to serve a good purpose. The noble bearing and dignified manners of Placidus won so com-

pletely upon the admiration of the Great King, that he several times offered the Roman prisoner his liberty and the sure prospect of immense wealth if he would only engage, on his word of honor, to hold a secret correspondence with him and inform him of the movements of the Roman army. But the proud old tribune ever steadily refused to enter into any such dishonorable engagement; and the king, who plumed himself particularly on his magnanimity, showed ten-fold more esteem than ever for him thereafter.

In the course of the war with Tiridates, king of Armenia, Sapor had taken, among other captives, a very beautiful young girl of royal blood, a very devout Christian, named Thecla. Captivated by her beauty and her virtues, the king made her his wife, in spite of her religion. When her first child was born, the high-priest came for the little prince to subject him to the usual ordeal of fire and water in the temple of the sun, but Thecla had determined to bring up the child in the Christian faith, and she positively refused her consent. Neither entreaties nor threats could shake the resolution of the queen. Then the Council of Satraps, urged on and instructed by the heads of the College of Magi, represented to the monarch that the welfare of the realm required the death of the mother and child. Sapor felt that he was in possession of a throne which he had not ascended by right of succession, but by favor of these very counsellors, who had snatched the sceptre from his elder brother,

Hormisdas,* to place it in his hands; and Hormisdas was still alive. Besides, he was young and inexperienced, and he knew but too well that no crime would have seemed too atrocious in the eyes of those faithless hypocrites, provided it could secure the supremacy of their superstitious worship. He yielded therefore to these specious reasons of state. It was supposed by many that some new object had attracted his affections, and that he had seized but too willingly the pretext of religion to justify the breaking of the first tie. However this may have been, the queen and her little son were immediately removed, with the profoundest secrecy, to a royal castle, far from the seat of government; and it was given out that they were both dead. An old eunuch, one of the most confidential creatures of the Persian high-priest, was appointed governor of the castle and guardian of the royal prisoner. The king informed her that her obstinacy in clinging to a foreign religion had estranged his affections, and that it was due altogether to his royal benignity that nothing worse had befallen her, since the Council of Satraps had decreed her death. She was warned to give no evidence of being still alive, as the first rumor of that nature which reached the court would be a signal of disaster to herself and her child.

The only one of her former friends and advisers who was true to the queen in her hour of trial, was

* This was the same Hormisdas of whom mention was made in the third chapter.

an Armenian lord, named Arbazanes, who followed her to her prison, and secretly conveyed to Sapor occasional tidings about his unfortunate queen and her disinherited offspring. The king was loath to stain his hands in her blood, and, indeed, it was much against his own will that he acted harshly towards a wife whom he loved and knew to be innocent. And just as he had rejoiced exceedingly when his brother, Hormisdas, had escaped from his prison and sought an asylum on Roman soil, on which occasion instead of pursuing him, he had even taken care that the exile's wife should be enabled to go to her husband, so now he would have been glad to get rid of Thecla and her child without any crime on his own part. It was some years before his wish could be gratified, but at length the occasion came. Arbazanes hit upon the plan of using, as an agent, the Roman tribune Placidus, already mentioned as having fallen into the hands of the Persians on the fatal field of Nisibis, but who had been some years residing at Ctesiphon, under nominal guard, until the opportunity should offer of an exchange for some Persian prisoner of equal rank. Arbazanes suggested to the king to entrust his little son to the Roman officer to be brought up in a foreign land, where he would be removed from the malice of the magi. The sense of paternal affection was not dead in the heart of Sapor; he felt gratified at finding a means of saving his son, and summoning the tribune before him, thus addressed him: "Roman, your

life and liberty are in my hands; yet it is not my purpose to make you atone for the lives of so many of my faithful servants who have fallen in the war I am forced to wage against your countrymen. I am willing rather to load you with favors if you know how to make yourself worthy of them."

"Great king," answered Placidus, "Rome is at war with you, and it is not for her soldiers to judge the value of her motives; but this much I may say to you, they hold your own high military spirit in the greatest esteem. I have had occasion to know that your clemency can be made to equal your fearless courage, and in whatever a Roman may, I shall deem it a high honor to obey you."

"If the Romans are as generous as they boast themselves to be," continued Sapor, "and if you are what I take you for, you may do my will. Listen. There is a little child whom my courtiers, through an excessive desire to serve me, would put to death if they could but discover him. I am weary of hiding and guarding him from their pursuit, and I have determined to intrust him to you if you will swear to me to keep my secret."

"King of kings," cried Placidus, "your confidence fills my heart with the deepest gratitude, and I do not fear to say that you have not misplaced it. My breast is an inviolable stronghold when once my word is pledged. But where can I hide a child whom the king of Persia cannot conceal?"

"Without the bounds of my empire. Anywhere, provided he be placed beyond the reach of the magi, and yet near enough to make it easy for me to hear of him often. Carrhae or Antioch would do very well."

"Then you restore me to freedom?"

"Certainly, you are free; and my royal treasure is open to you from this moment."

"Great king," cried the astonished tribune, "may your happiness never be less than your generosity!"

"Do you know," asked Sapor, "what it was that thus won the friendship and confidence I have shown to you, a stranger—a Roman—my enemy?"

"No, great king," replied the tribune.

"It was your refusal to serve me against your own country. When you replied to my liberal advances—'I have sworn fidelity to my sovereign. I cannot violate my oath!' then I admired you. Had you consented, I should have paid you with gold, but also with contempt."

"And you would have been right."

Well, now, swear to me as you swore to your emperor; swear by the same God by whom you swore to him."

"But what pledge do you require of me? Is it only to observe secrecy in this matter, or is it something besides that?"

"Nothing else; nothing but inviolable secrecy about these circumstances concerning the child. He must be brought up as your adopted son, and

in perfect ignorance of all that concerns his birth; you yourself must not inquire into it. Do you promise me this?"

Placidus raised his right hand and said: "By the God of heaven, whom I adore, by whom I swore fidelity to Constantine Augustus, and to Constantius, his son, I swear to the king of kings, to Sapor the Great, that no one in the world shall ever know from me the secret which is to-day entrusted to my keeping."

Sapor drawing a ring from his finger broke it in two with the hilt of his dagger. One semi-circle he kept for himself, and handing the other to Placidus, he said:

"Whenever a stranger comes to you, whether in the dress of a merchant, of a beggar, of a philosopher, or in any other guise, provided he shows you this half of my ring which I now hold here, you will receive my communications through him and remittances of gold for the support of yourself and your charge, and you may safely entrust to him all that you would wish to say to me concerning the child. Thus shall you act in this matter, and not otherwise. Do you swear to observe these conditions?"

"I do," said Placidus.

"And when you die," continued the king, "which event may the Great Sun long avert, will you leave him heir to all the possessions you may have acquired by means of the ample fortune I shall place at your command?"

"Yes, I swear it."

"Know then," resumed Sapor, "that on whatever day this child is found in the realms of Persia and recognized, he will fall a victim to the hatred of the magi. Not all my royal power could save him; the destinies of the kingdom are inexorable. And if, on the other hand, you should betray my secret to the Romans, my wrath would reach you whether in heaven above or in the abyss below. The hand of Sapor is not short; it strikes even to the utmost bounds of the earth!"

"King of kings," said Placidus haughtily, "there is no need of threats. The plighted faith of Placidus is enough."

"Spoken like a king!" said Sapor.

And when the plan of action had been well understood between them, Placidus took his leave. In a few days he had gathered about him quite a household of slaves and other attendants, as a means of better concealing the child. Arbazanes found but little difficulty in overcoming the natural repugnance of the queen to giving up her child, for she felt that it was useless for one in her condition to resist the will of the king, and besides, she was made acquainted with the fact that this was part of her royal husband's plan to save the life of the little prince, and her faithful attendant persuaded her that it would not be very long before she might hope for some occasion to escape and join her son in a foreign land. One condition, however, she insisted upon; it was that Arbazanes

should accompany the child, at least until he should be fairly settled in his new home, and that he should return to tell her of the condition, as to persons and place, in which he had left his little charge. This Arbazanes promised to do.

The tribune faithfully observed everything he had sworn to the king. He secured a dwelling at Carrhae, then an important Roman city, and gave out that the child had been born in Persia, where his mother had lately died. Though, in truth, the child's mother was not dead, she was leading a life worse than death; for when she found herself alone, deprived of the sweet solace of nursing the child who had been her only joy, she fell into a fit of melancholy so deep and bitter, that had not her faith sustained and inspired her with resignation to the divine will, she must inevitably have lost her reason. The faithful Arbazanes soon returned and consoled her by the assurance that her child had reached Carrhae in perfect health and safety, where he was carefully and generously provided with all that he could need, so that he really lived more like a prince than like the child of a private citizen.

"Ah! that is the least of my cares on his account!" cried the Christian princess. "Until I know that he is baptized, my soul will have no rest. Woe is me! I should never have, on any condition, intrusted him to other hands. Better to have seen him die in my arms a Christian, than to know that he lives in joy and affluence, an unbe-

liever; and then, who can give me assurance that he will not forfeit his heavenly, as he has already lost his earthly, throne?"

"Why thus torment yourself with doubts, Lady?" interposed Arbazanes. "Placidus is a Christian as well as ourselves."

"Did he promise you to have the child baptized in due time?" asked the unhappy queen, anxiously.

"I did not ask any promise from him," he replied, "because Placidus does not frequent our assemblies."

"Then how do you say that he is a Christian?"

"He speaks like a Christian, and in all his dwelling there is not the least sign of idolatrous superstition. He makes the sign of the cross before taking his meals, and has in his room a picture of the Good Shepherd, before which I believe that he performs his devotions in secret. He must, then, be a Christian in his heart."

Though these assurances did in part allay the fears and anxious doubts of the Christian mother, they could not wholly establish peace and consolation in her soul. The ever-present memory of her only child, and her maternal longing to be once more with him, plunged her into the deepest sadness and suffering. Accordingly, she was ever pressing Arbazanes to devise some means of effecting her escape and bringing her to her son, where she might, even under the disguise of a servant if necessary, see to his being brought up a Christian. Besides, it was dangerous for her to remain much

longer where she was, for the whole country was being put to fire and sword by the magi, who scoured city and country in their unrestrained fury against the Christians, and whole families were daily hurried off together to the places of execution. The new queen was the bitterest instigator of this bloody persecution, and seemed to take particular delight in witnessing the torture of Christian women. There could not, then, be much doubt as to the fate of the unfortunate prisoner. Should the queen even come to suspect the secret of her existence, she would certainly have given the king no peace until this hated rival had been removed by a cruel death. Thecla had observed that the watchfulness of her guards was of late far less strict than in the beginning of her captivity; she knew also that if the king had not been goaded on by superstitious fanatics, he would never have acted so cruelly towards her. Moreover, the joy which she knew that Sapor felt in his heart at the escape of his brother, Hormisdas, and his active agency in the removal of her child to a place of safety, seemed to warrant the hope that there would not be much trouble taken to pursue her should she succeed in effecting her escape. And so she determined to make the attempt. Whether through the connivance of the governor of the castle,—under directions from the king—whether through the carelessness of the guards or the skill with which the plan was concerted and carried out, the attempt

succeeded perfectly. But now came the hardest part of the enterprise. She had to wander through vast regions of waste and uninhabited country, to push her way at night through thick forests, peopled by wild beasts; to wade many swift mountain-torrents, ever in peril of her life, ever doubtful in the morning whether she would reach the evening, and in the evening, whether she should again behold the light of day. And such was her existence for many months, with no clothing but that which she wore on leaving her prison, and no food but the leavings begged at the door of the shepherd's hut. Arbazanes was her only support in these trying moments, and he served her both as attendant and guide; he made all necessary inquiries concerning the route to be followed; sought the scanty supplies on which they lived, and, at night, he provided what shelter he could by bending down and interlacing the lithe branches of some young trees. But his best ministry was that of consoler, which he exercised at all times by soothing words, by comforting expressions from Holy Writ, and by frequently recalling to her mind the truth that divine Providence watches over the ways of the just. Several times the royal fugitive swooned away under the combined effects of weariness and trouble of mind, and Arbazanes began to fear that he might be obliged to bury her in some wild desert, or amid the dark horrors of some lonely cave.

It pleased heaven to bring the fugitives safely

across the Euphrates, and, after a long and painful pilgrimage, the exiled princess found rest in the safe and hospitable mansion of Placidus at Carrhae. But it was also in the inscrutable designs of the same divine Providence, that the end of her pilgrimage should measure the term of her life. In vain did the noble-hearted tribune lavish upon her every care and attention inspired by Christian charity and a deep respect for exalted rank and virtue condemned to undeserved punishment; the hapless queen enjoyed but a few days the happiness of being with her child and of seeing him safe from the wiles of his cruel enemies.

When she knew that her last hour was come, she sent for Placidus and exacted from him a most solemn promise, several times repeated, that he would never allow her child to return to Persia, nor permit any Persian, of whose fidelity he was not sure, to have any intercourse with him. The boy was now about seven years of age, and, as often happened in those times, was not yet baptized; but his pious mother, after praying long and fervently for him, called him to the side of her deathbed and, embracing him tenderly, placed upon his head a small volume of the holy Gospels with the words: "Far better for you, my child, such a crown as this, than any jewelled diadem you could wear here on earth. God grant that I may see you reign in heaven rather than on earth, where all is vanity, injustice and sorrow. Lord of mercy and only consoler of the afflicted, hear the

last and most fervent petition of a wife rejected, of a queen in exile for serving Thee! I do not regret what I have lost; I know that it is but as dust and ashes; I only ask of Thee what I know Thou wouldst have me ask. Grant that the saving waters of baptism may one day fall upon this loved head." In a few moments the pious soul was freed from its sorrows, and was at rest at last.

Placidus did not remain long at Carrhae, which was beginning to be somewhat unsafe on account of the yearly rekindling of the war between the Romans and the Persians; he therefore removed to Antioch, from which place he could hold communication as easily as before with the Persian king, by reason of the great number of merchants and others who were continually passing through that great mart.

Placidus kept the secret faithfully up to the last; and Tigranes never had an inkling of the mystery until the aged warrior, after receiving the last sacraments, found himself alone with his son, and was exhorting him with greater fervor than ever not to defer baptism. He had begun to tell of the famous apparition of the cross previous to the defeat of Maxentius, but his efforts had weakened him so much that his mind commenced to wander. Tigranes, perceiving this, advised his father to take a little rest, and began to arrange the pillow for the old man to recline upon. But Placidus, with his eyes wide open and flashing like crystal in the sunlight, motioned him away with his hand and

continued: "Who art thou, old man? How that mitre sparkles on thy brow! . . . . What means that army in white? . . . . I understand; the rider and his horse rush headlong into the flood, and the waters swallow up the chariot of Pharaoh together with his army. . . . . Thy right hand, O Lord, is glorified. And Thou art the merciful leader of Thy people. . . . . Who is like unto Jehovah? God reigneth forever and conquereth eternity, ... and Thy sanctuary is unshaken." . . .

These and many other incoherent things did the sick man utter, until he fell back exhausted and subdued. Pistos explained to Tigranes the meaning of these broken words, as he alone could do, who was a Christian, and who during a long term of service, or rather of friendly intercourse, had learned to read even the half-expressed thoughts of his master. Placidus had been wounded in the great battle against Maxentius, at the moment when the tyrant, pursued by Constantine, was plunging into the Tiber. But having been borne beyond the reach of danger, he had found a place of refuge in a Christian village on the Vatican Hill, at whose foot that memorable engagement took place. After recovering and receiving instruction in the faith, he had been baptized at the tomb of St. Peter. That mitred old man, about whom he was now raving, was the venerable Miltiades, then Bishop of Rome; that army in white meant the priests, who sang psalms and thanked the God of Hosts for the victory of Constantine, which pro-

mised universal peace to the Church. Placidus had no doubt often heard the canticles of the Church, and the one, of which he had just recited an occasional disconnected verse, was a sacred hymn in the inspired books, which must have particularly struck his warlike imagination.

While Pistos and Tigranes were thus conversing apart, hoping that the sick man would take a little repose, he repeatedly interrupted them; at one time with low moans or confused murmurs, at another with well articulated and solemn words. Tigranes standing on one side of his bed and Pistos on the other, began to soothe and quiet him. Placidus kept his eyes closed, then suddenly opened them, and gazing at both with a troubled stare, exclaimed in terror and affright: "Whither are you dragging me, ye heartless wretches? Oh, degenerate Constantius! thou makest war on bishops, and thou conquerest; before the Persians thou givest way and fliest. . . . Thou coward! . . . Thou betrayest our blood, as though the Roman soldier were the vilest slave, thou allowest us to be caught like birds in the nets of the fowler, craven that thou art!" . . . And in his ravings he tossed his arms wildly to and fro, as if he were calling down curses upon some one's head. Pistos tried to put his hands back under the bed-covering, but Placidus cried aloud: "Ye barbarians, respect my person. Who dares put shackles on a Roman tribune?"

"No one is hurting you, father; that is Pistos, and I am your son, Tigranes." . . .

"Pistos! Tigranes! Great king! what wilt thou have me do with that child?" . . .

"Unfortunate princess! I adopt thy dear Tigranes as my son; he shall be a sacred pledge to me. . . . Depart in peace for a better world. I swear by the word of God I will lead him to Christ. . . . . He shall be the son of the great king by a two-fold title." . . .

At these words, which sounded so little like raving, and which evidently pointed to some profound secret, known to Pistos alone, the faithful servant hastily and unconsciously pressed the palm of his hand against his forehead and exclaimed: "Great God! what a veil is rent asunder at this moment!"

"Pistos, what mystery is that?" said Tigranes. "You know it, I see it in your eyes; you are the only one that came with us from Persia; speak!"

"I cannot."

"I insist on it."

"It is not lawful."

"I command it."

"It is a secret unto death."

Tigranes, struck by the words of the dying man, did not at that moment inquire any farther into the secret; but no sooner had he closed the eyes of his father than he began to press Pistos, to threaten him, and force him to unravel the mystery. It was impossible for Pistos to conceal it any longer; and then Tigranes learned for the first time that he was the son of the Persian king, Sapor, and of the holy

princess, Thecla. Pistos was none other than Arbazanes, voluntarily become a slave in order to console the afflicted Thecla, and watch over the child, whom the pious mother had entrusted to his keeping.

IX.

A BOLD RESOLVE.

THE important and unexpected discovery which Tigranes had just made concerning his birth and parentage, strongly moved his ardent and resolute nature. The condition in which he had found his supposed father, the moving exhortations of the old man, and other circumstances attending his return to Antioch, had, as we have already seen, very materially changed his feelings and disposition toward the engagement into which he had entered with Julian. He now felt that it was a burden upon him; but he remained firm in his purpose of proceeding to Carrhae and fulfilling his promise, though he foresaw that he would not be able to discharge this duty as early as he had hoped, and we have, in a previous chapter, quoted the letter in which he announced this necessary delay to Julian.

After the death of Placidus and the revelation of the great secret, to the determination of going to Carrhae he joined the resolution of crossing the boundaries of the Persian realm, and of confronting Sapor, his true father, in his own palace. "The Persian throne," so Tigranes one day reasoned within himself, "is denied me by adverse Fate, or by the God who rules Fate. It is useless for me to seek it; neither my own countrymen nor the Romans, nor even my father himself, can move a finger in my behalf. It does not become a wise man to struggle with destiny, nor to flatter his fancy with chimeras, nor to pine after the impossible—much less to fret over misfortune. No, cruel Fate, thou shalt not enjoy that triumph over me! No, no! The loss of a diadem snatched from me by fortune, shall not so disturb the mind of Tigranes. And yet," continued the fiery and determined youth, "all this does not justify my father in thus making me an exile, and keeping me inexorably removed from his presence. It is my firm purpose to enter his palace and to look upon him with a fearless eye. What though a throng of magi and of satraps surround his throne, though a host of slaves cringe at his feet, though all the East tremble if he but bend his brow, I shall look upon him in all the splendor of his majesty, I shall there call him father, and compel him to acknowledge me as his son. Come what may, I shall follow my star! I cannot, I must not go on dragging my way through life unknown to my real father, like one accursed!"

It must not be supposed that in maturing a purpose so daring and so hazardous, Tigranes did not foresee the immense difficulties and obstacles which he must inevitably meet. On the contrary, he habitually arrayed them all before him, examined and studied them—but only under those aspects which represented them as surmountable. As to relinquishing his design, or even hesitating in the execution of it, no such contingency ever entered his thoughts; so firm of purpose was he when once he had made up his mind to act. And so the hours went by, sometimes joyful, sometimes sad; now bright and calm, again dark and stormy, according to the success or failure of his enterprise as he enacted it daily in his lively fancies; at one time imagining himself successfully beyond all obstacles and kindly greeted in the very palace halls of Sapor, at others repulsed by the royal command, and rudely thrust from the gates of his rightful home. Often, at night, when the tumult of wild fancies thronging his brain drove away all possibility of sleep, he would seek the room of Pistos, and seated on the edge of the old man's couch, would talk of his early childhood and inquire about every least detail as if for the first time. And this faithful old friend, who knew well what projects were growing in the mind of the fiery youth, took frequent occasion to remind him of the fearful threats which hung over his head should he ever dare to set foot on Persian soil. But Tigranes made light of these threats, as if

they were not meant for him, and he generally replied by unfolding a map which he had lately purchased from the illustrious geographer, Alipius, and entering upon a long inquiry about the roads, the streams, the mountains and deserts, and cities lying on his route; and all the information thus obtained he noted down carefully on his memorandum tablets.

One day while Tigranes and Pistos were engaged in conversation on this subject, a stranger was announced. He wore the dress of a Persian merchant, and on entering the apartment, after saluting the occupants, he immediately asked:

"Is this the dwelling of Arbazanes?"

Pistos divined at once who the stranger was and what was his errand, and taking him aside, asked him why he inquired for Arbazanes and not for Placidus.

"I know all," replied the stranger. "Placidus is dead, and I must necessarily treat with Arbazanes."

"Very well, I am Arbazanes; though here they call me Pistos. But have you not some token to present by which I may know the truth of your mission?"

"Yes; here it is," answered the stranger, producing the half-circlet of the royal ring. Pistos fitted his own half to it and saw that they agreed perfectly.

"Friend of the Great King," said the Persian in a low voice, "could you not receive me somewhere apart from this youth?"

"Speak without fear, messenger of king Sapor,"

replied Pistos, "this token belongs more to that youth than to me; and the message of the Great King may and should be heard by him."

The confident tone of Pistos and his evident understanding with king Sapor, removed all doubts from the mind of the royal envoy, who proceeded to tell them that he was the usual agent employed by the king to receive information about young Tigranes, and he produced the purple bag containing the usual amount of gold and precious gems. Pistos received the treasure and presented it to Tigranes, at the same time making him a sign to let him treat with the stranger.

"Messenger," said Pistos, "you may announce to your royal master that the treasure has been delivered to him who holds the required token, that is, to Arbazanes, because Placidus is no more. You may add that Tigranes inherited a large fortune from Placidus, that he is well and happy. That is all."

Tigranes, who had now recovered from his first surprise, added:

"Could you not remain here to-night and start on your return to-morrow, and meanwhile a more fitting answer might be prepared in writing?"

"I cannot; to-morrow I shall be fifty stadia from Antioch."

Tigranes began to pace the room in an agitated manner. Pistos would have wished to take him apart and advise him, but he was not to be drawn away. He seemed to be absorbed in the con-

sideration of some new and important plan, when the Persian abruptly asked him:

"Young man, are you the possessor of that ring, or is it this gentleman who is with you?"

"You need have no fear about that," replied Tigranes. "We are friends, and all is common among the friends of the Great King. I am the Tigranes about whom the king is concerned; and you may tell him,"—here he passed his hand over his forehead and his eyes, and again paced the room repeatedly as one who is maturing an important reply, and is struggling with a host of conflicting thoughts. "You may tell him," he continued, "that Tigranes is about to set out for,"—another pause. "Well," said he at last, with the tone of one who has taken a desperate resolution, "tell him that Tigranes will soon see his father! That is all."

"But what shall I say, if the king asks me who is your father, or how he is?"

"He will not ask you," said Tigranes, in a tone which put an end to the interview.

The stranger asked for some rags that he might disguise himself, at need, as a beggar, and on receiving them took his leave. But Pistos had understood the meaning of the words uttered by his young friend, and the thought of the young man's daring resolution gave him no peace. He left no means untried to turn away his mind from the thought; he brought in the services of Anthusa also, who used all the influence of her words, though, of course indirectly, and as one who knew

nothing of the real destination of Tigranes, to dissuade him from attempting any distant journey. That holy widow had no greater desire than to see him enrolled among the catechumens, and accordingly she kept always before his eyes the example lately given him by Placidus, and the last solemn charge uttered by the dying tribune, and she begged him earnestly not to reject the advances of God's mercy, which was calling him to the faith. Often, when she found him evidently fixed in his purpose, the pious matron would reason with him to this effect:

"If you must, at any cost, satisfy this youthful fancy, why do you not visit Egypt, as your father—peace to his soul!—recommended you to do before we closed his eyes? If you are troubled with doubts, there you can consult the illustrious Didymus, a wonder of wisdom, who gathers around him, from all parts of the world, young men eager in the pursuit of sacred learning. If you are desirous to acquire eloquence or some other noble accomplishment, you will find in Alexandria the great Athanasius, whom I myself saw here in Antioch, some seven years ago, when I had the honor and the happiness of kissing his hand. What a true man of God! You know that the whole Church resounds with his praise; you know how he has stood fearlessly before wicked Emperors, has crushed heresies and defended the faith. When he opens his lips, oracles rather than words seem to pour forth in their inspired utterance."

"Yes, I know," Tigranes would reply with evident weariness.

"Will you, then, go to Alexandria?" pursued the good matron.

"I will think about it," was the only answer. And so the conversation generally ended without any visible result. Meanwhile, the approach of the genial spring was softening, day by day, the stern rigors of departing winter, and Tigranes knew, by the reappearance of the Persian messengers, that the mountains were already passable. So, one evening, shortly after the scenes last recorded, he called Pistos and said to him: "I am summoned by important business to Carrhae; you will"—

"And to Ctesiphon?" interrupted Pistos.

"To Carrhae, certainly," replied Tigranes; "after that, to Ctesiphon, perhaps. At any rate, once on the road, I shall make up my mind as I travel. You will please to see that all the preparations for the journey be made within three days."

When Placidus was released from his captivity in Persia, he sojourned for a time, as the reader will remember, at Carrhae, the ancient Haran, where Jacob met Rachel; or perhaps it would be more correct to say that he dwelt in the immediate neighborhood of Carrhae, in a splendid and delightful villa, the residence of the noble Christian couple, Vologeses and Tarbula. Tigranes had reached his seventh year when Placidus removed thence to Antioch, and during this period the constant com-

panion of all his childish sports was a little daughter of his noble hosts, who had been named Thecla, in memory of the sainted mother of Tigranes. When our travellers reached Carrhae in their present journey, Tigranes found that the former companion of his boyish days was no longer there, but had been for some time at Ctesiphon, with Tampsaore, a brother of Vologeses, and that her mother was somewhat troubled in mind at not having received any tidings about her for a year, especially as it was well known that a persecution was raging in Persia against the Christians. This circumstance at once removed the last vestige of hesitation that might have lingered in the mind of Tigranes regarding the propriety of pushing his journey into Persia.

"What do you think," he said to Vologeses and Tarbula, "of my bringing you news of your daughter myself?"

"How can that be done?" they asked with some appearance of surprise and doubt.

"By going to see her in person."

"Are you on your way to Ctesiphon?" asked both the anxious parents in a breath.

"Yes."

"But what can take you there?"

"The desire of seeing and learning. I have visited Greece and Italy, and now the notion takes me that I ought to visit my native land. So make ready whatever letters you wish to send."

After making this announcement, Tigranes rose

and left the house to visit the tomb of his mother, and as he stood reverently before the simple monument, he read with deep emotion the touching inscription:

"Thecla, journeying from Persia, here found rest in Christ from all the afflictions of life, praying that her son might made be a sharer in the gifts of the Holy Ghost."

Tigranes returned from this visit to his mother's ashes with a strong feeling of abhorrence at the thought of presenting himself to the High Priest of the Moon; but his strong friendship for Julian, the confidence which the young Cæsar had placed in him, and, above all, his oath, which he held as inviolable, overcame his repugnance, and without saying a word to any one about it, he went to the temple of the Moon, and presented to the High Priest the letter, with the goblet, which Julian had intrusted to him.

This business despatched, his only thought was to set out at once for Ctesiphon. Pistos showed himself a faithful friend in this conjuncture; for though the resolution of his young charge was a matter of deep concern to him and dangerous in the extreme, yet he determined to follow him even to Ctesiphon. They took the shorter, though less safe, of the two ways which led from Carrhae to the Persian metropolis, sailing along the Tigris, whose waters reflect the walls of Ctesiphon on one bank, and on the opposite shore those of Seleucia. Immediately on landing they went to the dwelling

of Tampsaore; but Thecla was not there. They found the whole family plunged in the deepest grief, for Thecla was in prison because of her religion, and might be sacrificed at any moment, in the most barbarous manner, by the cruel Magi who were all-powerful in Persia. Naturally enough, Tigranes, having dared so bold an enterprise as to come back to Ctesiphon with the avowed purpose of seeing his father, Sapor, face to face, was not a man to leave untried any means to save the destined victim. When alone he began to reflect on this sad event: "and shall such a noble and pure soul," he thought, "be threatened with impunity by those perfidious wretches, the same who snatched the crown from my brow, and deprived my mother of kingdom, honor and life? No! So long as the son of Sapor can wield a sword, this shall not be!" and under the impulse of this resolution he would have acted at once, but the prudent counsels of Pistos and further reflection on his own part, induced him to follow a less hasty and violent course of action. However, he determined not to delay in seeking to obtain an interview with his royal father, to whom he wrote as follows:

"To the King of kings, Brother of the Sun and Moon, allied to the Stars, to the great Servant of Ormuz, of the race of the gods, Sapor, Giant of giants, greeting:*

* These and other such high-sounding titles were much prized, and always assumed by the Persian monarchs.

"I, Tigranes, ask to see my father. I have no request to make, but only that I may speak to him once, that I may rejoice in the greatness of his glory, and then I shall be happy to return whence I came, there to remain for the future. If the Great King has forgotten the ancient decree of death against me, let him give me a sign by touching his royal diadem as he crosses the threshold of the temple of Baal. If he shall do this, remembering that he is a father, then I shall present myself at the gates of the palace in the dress of a Persian noble, unknown to all, and the Great King may order me to be admitted into his presence. Should my request be refused, it will be vain to seek for me; I am but as a grain of sand on the vast sea-shore, but as a little bird of the air in a boundless forest."

The letter was sent to the king by an unknown hand. In this, as in all else that he did during his brief stay at Ctesiphon, Tigranes was guided by Pistos, whose practical knowledge of Persian customs and of the spirit of the court, enabled them so to act as to escape all observation or suspicion. The king received the letter on the same day on which it was written, and on the morrow, as he was proceeding with great solemnity to the temple of Baal, he signified his acquiescence, for at the moment of stepping over the threshold of the grand entrance, he threw aside his royal mantle, and, raising his arm, touched with his sceptre the royal crown upon his head. Hardly had the king

returned to the palace when Tigranes presented himself in the dress prescribed by the ceremonial of the court, with his hands completely covered by his long sleeves. He was at once admitted to a private audience. Sapor seemed to be repressing some great emotion as he looked upon the noble youth kneeling before him, but recovering himself promptly, he touched him with the royal sceptre and asked:

"Who are you?"

"A son of the Great King," replied Tigranes.

"Rise and let me embrace you," said the king.

Sapor, after holding him at arm's length, and eyeing him two or three times from head to foot, pressed him affectionately to his bosom.

"But," said he, "what can you seek in this country, where you are proscribed, where any one who recognizes you could work your ruin? Do you not know that even your father, with all his power, would be unable to save you from the rage of those who gave him the sceptre? Who has revealed my secret? Who has violated the oath made to me, which was to preserve the peace of my realm and secure to you an honorable privacy?"

"My father, did your whole court know of my presence here, they would not stir hand or foot to remove me if they knew also what is the object of my coming. Placidus, my Roman foster-father, in the delirium of his last moments, tore away the veil which hid from me my birth and parentage;

and now I have come, not to disinherit some one more fortunate than myself, but only to hear myself once called your son by your own lips, and then I shall depart."

During these last words of Tigranes, the cloud, which had been gathering on the brow of the Persian monarch, gradually passed away, and now Sapor, assuming a milder and more familiar tone, began to converse freely with his son, inquiring minutely into all the particulars of the death of Placidus. He was gratified to learn that the Roman had been faithful to his promises, and that Tigranes had been left with an ample fortune at his disposal, but he wished still to continue the princely allowance which he had been wont to send annually by a secret agent. Tigranes expressed his gratitude, and then, at his father's request, exposed to him the plans he had formed for the future; he was too frank to conceal anything, and Sapor learned that his son was one of the most intimate confidants of Julian, and was likely soon to form part of the imperial household.

"And does Cæsar know who you are?" asked Sapor, with some agitation.

"I swear to you," answered Tigranes, "that he has not the least suspicion of it, nor has any other living man; and he shall never know it."

"But what is your purpose? What can you seek at the court of your father's enemies? What if they should arm you against your own father?"

"The arms would never be wielded by my hand."

"You are not hiding any secret plan from me?"

"No; I am your son. The only crown I seek now is philosophy, since every other diadem is taken from me."

"It is fate that has snatched it from your brow. My hand saved your life, and did not rob you of the sceptre."

"I assure you once more, that now I desire no crown but that of wisdom and learning. Never shall the day dawn on which I shall draw the sword against my native land."

Sapor was not destitute of noble instincts. At these words, uttered by Tigranes with decision and feeling, the king clasped him in his arms and held him for some moments closely pressed to his bosom.

"Now I know that you are my son," he exclaimed with a look of fatherly pride, "and these noble words reveal it to me more than even the lineaments in which I trace your resemblance to myself. I know you by those lofty sentiments which tell me that truly the blood of the Sassanidæ courses through your veins. Go, now, far from this your native land, a land of death for you; hide the glory of your ancestry, that the name of son of the Great King may not be dishonored by your low estate. Keep yourself safe from the keen eyes of my own servants, safe from the suspicions, from the insatiable hatred of the cruel Magi, and bear with you always the love of your royal father."

"My wish has been granted to the full. And

now, my father, I ask only one favor, one which you can easily grant, a mere nothing"—

"Quick! name it," said the king, hurriedly. "At any moment we may be discovered and betrayed."

"There is a Christian virgin in your prisons; I ask only her liberty."

"What do you ask! Do you not know that I have ordered the destruction of all monasteries of Christian virgins, and that those who refuse to obey my orders are doomed to a violent death? I have already sentenced a number of them myself. But what interest have you in this maiden?"

"She is the daughter of one who has given me hospitality in Carrhae, and her only crime is to have fallen under the censure of the Magi, because of her religion."

"I could not, for any earthly reason, save a Christian from the rigor of the law. I have sworn to exterminate the whole sect which favors that superstition, which is of Roman origin, and threatens the safety of the empire. If you are Tigranes, my son, you will feel the same contempt and hatred for the Christians."

"Father," said Tigranes, with deep feeling, "give me Thecla."

"Do you love the maiden?" asked Sapor.

"I have not yet learned to love her, though I may yet do so. She was my playmate in childhood, and she bears the name of my mother"—and here his voice quivered with suppressed emo-

tion. Sapor himself felt an unwonted tenderness in his heart at the mention of that name, which recalled such tender memories, and, after a moment's hesitation, he replied:

"On the word of the Great King, if Thecla is not already condemned, I shall, on this very day, order her to be restored to her parents; but if the High-Priest has already pronounced the decree against her, there is no hope, for his word is all-powerful in matters of religion."

Tigranes bowed low and kissed the royal sceptre in gratitude for the promise, for he knew that Thecla was not yet condemned. The trial of such prisoners was held in public, and his hosts had assured him that Thecla had not yet appeared before the tribunal. As Tigranes was bowing before the king, a noise was heard without as if many persons were gathering on the portico which looked out upon the great square before the palace. Sapor hastily embraced Tigranes, and pressing a kiss upon his brow said, in a hurried tone:

"Haste, away! But remember always that you are my son. Great necessities weigh upon mighty monarchs as upon the poorest of their subjects. Yet, though all Asia trembles at my name, I can do only one thing for you—I can only love you."

"It is all I ask. Be sure that I shall never do aught unworthy of the name of the Sassanidæ!"

X.

THE RESCUE.

GREAT as had been the ardor of Tigranes to reach Ctesiphon, and to have an interview with his father, Sapor, still more ardent was now his desire to hasten, though with imminent personal risk, to the rescue of Thecla. Sapor kept his promise, and ordered the release of the Christian maiden; but the High-Priest, Mauptas, took means to evade the royal command. He sent to Tampsaore to inform him that "the King had graciously pardoned the girl Thecla, and ordered her to be returned to her family, but that unfortunately she had died in prison a few hours too soon to enjoy the benefit of the royal clemency; still it was good that they should be made acquainted with the divine clemency of the Great King, and should be duly grateful for it. It would be useless for them, he said further, to trouble themselves about the body of their daughter, for it had been buried in a common grave with those of the Christians who had been put to death." This artifice did not deceive Tampsaore and his family, much less Tigranes, who had certain information that Thecla had been taken from the city to a country house belonging to the High-Priest,

and accordingly he quietly left the house without telling anybody whither or in what company he was going. He returned quite late at night, and meeting Tampsaore alone, he said to him:

"I can tell you that to-morrow night Thecla will be with you without fail."

"How?"

"You must not know that."

"What daring attempt have you on foot now?"

"Do not question me on that point."

"But I fear that you are striving after what is impossible."

"Impossible? Three of the swiftest dromedaries are already prepared for you and Thecla; my ship is already being quickly towed by camels toward Cunaxa and Carrhae. At Cunaxa the provisions are purchased for the journey, and all things are so ordered that we shall be able to start without exciting any suspicion. No one will dare to follow or molest us, for we are protected by the word of the King, who has pardoned her, and the word of the King of Persia is an inviolable oath. Mauptas is too wily to move in the matter, for he would thus only discover his own act of disobedience, which would turn out badly for him."

"But do you mean to tear the child from their grasp by open violence? Only reflect; they might"—

"I ask no advice," said Tigranes, moving to the door, and once more he disappeared, nor did any one see a sign of him during the next day.

The escort to which the High-Priest had committed Thecla conveyed her to the new prison in which the Christian virgin was to be concealed. On the evening of her arrival, as she sat alone watching the decline of the day, the eunuch who had been appointed her immediate guardian handed her a fan made of fresh palm-leaves, cautiously whispering to her, at the same time, that there was some message for her written on the leaves, and that she must destroy the fan immediately after reading it, unless she wished both him and herself to perish in the most cruel torments. Thecla read the following words:

"Tigranes, the friend of your childhood, is watching over you. He will certainly save you from the hands of your villanous jailer. Pray to your Christ that He may be propitious to us."

"God grant that this be true, that it come to pass quickly!" murmured Thecla, raising her eyes towards the stars which were beginning to sparkle in the heavens above. "Great and Almighty God, be Thou with us."

The name of Tigranes recalled a world of pleasant memories, thoughts of those innocent sports which they had enjoyed together in the bright days of their innocent childhood. "And now Tigranes must be one of the brethren," soliloquized Thecla. "But then, why does he say 'of *your* Christ?' It may be some new snare laid for me. And yet it cannot be a trick,—he recommends himself to Christ and trusts in Him,—he must be one of ours—he must be a Christian!"

Then arose in the mind of Thecla a succession of agitating reflections and doubts. How could any attempt at her liberation succeed against so many obstacles, amid so many guards? Then came the dread of the cruel vengeance that would be wreaked on her should the attempt fail; and on the other hand, the fear that she was perhaps forfeiting a glorious opportunity to win the martyr's crown. Such thoughts, together with the anxious, doubtful and trembling expectation of the critical moment, kept her in a state of feverish and, of course, sleepless excitement during the whole night. And all this while the timid, trembling Christian maiden did not see the bright angel that hovered around her, noting the flutterings of that pure young heart, and its fervent aspirations of deep piety, and then presented those precious offerings on the mystic altar in heaven, on which burns perpetually the sweet incense, the prayers of the Saints, which, breaking upon the footstool of the Almighty's throne, falls back in gentle showers of grace and mercy on the earth below.

Tigranes, in the meantime, was not idle. Concealed by the shadows of the thick grove that surrounded the High-Priest's dwelling, he was moving around the prison which held the object of his daring enterprise, like a lion watching his opportunity to spring upon the coveted prey, and as soon as the early moon had disappeared below the horizon he set about carrying out his hazardous undertaking. He had but one companion,

one of the rowers on board his galley, a fearless youth, and ready for any daring act, but even this solitary attendant was charged only with keeping, in a neighboring jungle, a pair of swift horses, ready saddled, to start at a moment's notice. With the help of this companion, Tigranes had cut down a stout young sapling, which he stripped of its branches, and sharpened at one end. This was to serve as a battering ram or a lever, as need might require. Thus armed, he approached the house, which was already buried in deep silence; with two or three well-directed thrusts he managed to insert the sharp point of the stick between the folding-doors at the main entrance, and plying this lever vigorously he soon succeeded in breaking open that barrier. So strong was the shock that the bolts and hinges were wrenched from their fastenings, and the door-posts split from top to bottom. Springing over the wreck he had made, he was striding across the vestibule, when several of the slaves, who had been roused by the noise, came hurrying down with lanterns and tapers to see what had happened. At the sight of the shattered doors and of the fiery youth, armed to the teeth, who was making for them with no gentle expression of countenance, and not knowing how many of the same sort might be behind, the startled and half-conscious servants fled in all directions, calling for help. By this time the whole house was in an uproar, and the terrified inhabitants were running in all directions. Tigranes rushed

towards the main staircase, and meeting a slave hurrying on blindly, in terror of he knew not what danger, he seized him by the hair, and laying the edge of his scimetar upon the head of the trembling slave, "Lead me to where Thecla is," he cried, "or I will cleave your head in twain!"

But there was no need to lose time in seeking Thecla, for, when she heard the shrieks of the women, the cries of the slaves calling for help, the hurried tramp of feet, and the slamming of doors in all parts of the house, she instantly divined that her promised deliverance was at hand, and she accordingly hurried from her room and was descending the stairs just as Tigranes was uttering her name.

"Christian maiden," cried her deliverer, as soon as he perceived her, "in the name of the Great King, who has pardoned you, come with me!"

Thecla hastened toward him with instinctive confidence, and clung to him with the frightened look of a dove pursued by a hawk. And indeed, by this time two or three of the slaves who had sufficiently recovered from their first surprise, to ascertain the small odds against them, had armed themselves with whatever chance first threw in their way, and seemed disposed to dispute their exit. But when they met the fiery glance of Tigranes, who was advancing upon them like an angry lion, his scimetar flashing back the light of their torches as he swung it around him to clear the way, they instinctively fell back as before

approaching death and obeyed his fierce command: "Stand back! The first man that bars my way I will cut down like a dog!"

But just beyond the threshold they were met by a new and unexpected obstacle. Mauptas had chosen that dark and secret hour of the night to come to his country house, and at the very moment when Tigranes and Thecla were issuing from the doorway, his litter had been set down at the gate. He had been startled on approaching the house to see lights moving rapidly to and fro within, and to hear the cries of the household; but it would be hard to describe his feelings when he reached the gate of the enclosure and saw the shattered doors lying in pieces about the threshold, his slaves scattered in terror and confusion, and his prisoner, whom he thought so carefully secured, now snatched from his hands by a fierce young warrior, who kept all at bay with his drawn scimetar.

For a moment he stood as if rooted to the spot, but recovering himself a little, found voice to cry out to his slaves, though in trembling accents:

"Treason! Seize him!"

But the fiery youth was already upon them, brandishing his sword in a manner which promised to open a way for him very speedily.

"Slaves, strike him down!" cried Mauptas, shrinking completely behind his attendants.

"The first one that moves is a dead man!" cried Tigranes in a tone and with a flourish of his blade

which showed that he was disposed to make good his assertion. "Lying wretch," he continued, throwing a glance of rage and scorn upon the High-Priest, "make way for me or your last hour is come! My sword strikes in the name of the Great King!"

The look of his opponent, the flashing of the bright scimetar before his eyes, and the name of the King had the desired effect upon the old man. His knees gave way under him and he fell back into the arms of his slaves, crying, in a tone of abject terror, "Save me! save me!"

Tigranes, leading the rescued maiden by the hand, passed out from the enclosure and no one dared to follow.

As soon as they had passed beyond immediate danger and his excitement began to cool, Tigranes suddenly perceived that in the heat of the encounter he had held so tightly the hand of the young girl that he had almost dislocated her fingers, and he expressed his regret at his forgetfulness; but Thecla, who had been as much excited as himself by the dangers and the risks they were running, had not felt the pain. And now her mind was very busy with many thoughts suggested by the words and the manner of Tigranes. She had hoped that he was a Christian; then she could not help noticing that he had shown very little Christian mildness and self-restraint in the affair through which they had just passed. Then she wondered who had sent him, and whither he was leading her;

but she had not the courage to ask him any questions, nor did Tigranes say another word until they reached the place where his companion was waiting with the horses. Then turning to the maiden, he said, in a tone of encouragement:

"Thecla, fear nothing; this man is my faithful attendant, and a Christian like yourself. I am the same to you as a foster-brother. Now mount this horse and we will soon reach the place where your uncle Tampsaore is waiting for you. All is ready there for an immediate start; we shall move on to Carrhae, and, in a few weeks, I hope to give you back to the arms of your parents."

"God reward you for this, my generous deliverer," was all that Thecla could reply. In another moment they were in the saddle and away.

The ride was swift and silent. Tampsaore embraced his niece with tears of joy. The little caravan, mounted on dromedaries, set forward quickly; Tigranes, his rower and Pistos keeping close together, ready, at any moment, to draw their swords if occasion should offer.

XI.

FROM CTESIPHON TO ROME.

THE little caravan escorting the Christian maiden, rescued from the hands of the Persian High-Priest, was safe in Carrhae, and while Tigranes went to the Temple of the Moon to receive the response of the oracle, which he was to bring back to Julian, the parents of Thecla were consulting the holy Bishop Vities about their desire to reward the liberator of their daughter by bestowing her hand upon him. On learning the character and position of the young man, and his intention of becoming a Christian, which step he would take before marrying Thecla, the Bishop replied that he saw no reason for refusing his blessing on the union, for he was satisfied that God's blessing would follow the young people. Tigranes fell readily enough into the plans of his grateful hosts, but the final step could not be taken at once, for he felt that he had already delayed longer in the East than he had expected, and that he must hurry back to Julian, in Gaul, lest he should seem not to be prompt in the fulfilment of his plighted word. Still he wished to solemnize

at least the betrothal between himself and Thecla, which ceremony was performed by the Bishop the day before the departure of Tigranes for Gaul. The holy Bishop took occasion to say a few words of kindly admonition to them. "Conjugal love among us," said the Bishop, "is a symbol of the eternal love with which the Divine Spouse loves the Church, a Bride without spot or blemish, endowing her with never-ceasing fruitfulness. Not only is it a symbol of that divine and mystic union, it is also a real imitation of it, and even coöperates with it and increases its efficacy, inasmuch as it concurs with grace in increasing the number of true believers. Hence, you see how truly lofty is the view which the Church would have you take of the bond of love which unites you to-day. Hence, too, the share which the priests of God take in the ceremony of betrothal,* and the importance given to the sacrament of matrimony by Christ and by the Church, whilst among the heathens it is nothing more than the satisfaction of a natural instinct. Let your minds cherish these holy truths until the day when you will ratify these promises before the altar of God. I would not have any one," continued the holy prelate, "think it strange that I should, contrary to my custom, have sanctioned the betrothal of one of

* At the time of our narrative it was usual for the Bishop to perform or bless the betrothal. Much interesting and instructive information may be found on this subject in the letters of St. Augustin.

our sisters to one who is not of the fold. If I do not much mistake, Tigranes is already in heart one of ours."

At these words, Tigranes stepped forward in the presence of the whole assembly and said firmly, though with modesty:

"Yes, most Reverend Father, I am already one of the Brethren in heart, and so far from fearing the consequences of my avowal, I now here proclaim, on my honor, that when Thecla sees my face again, the holy sacrament shall have marked me as a member of the true fold."

Early the next morning Tigranes was leaving Carrhae, and moving rapidly on his journey to Gaul and to his friend Julian. Thecla, accompanied by her father, sought the seclusion of the monastery of Ibora, where she desired to spend in prayerful retirement, under the direction of the venerable Macrina, the days that must elapse until the time appointed for her nuptials.

Tigranes was much surprised, on his arrival at Lyons, to meet his old friend Valentinian returning to Pannonia, his native country, having been deposed from his office of tribune, either through jealousy, or—what was more likely—through the intrigues of the tribunes, who were more truly masters of the empire than Constantius himself. From Valentinian he learned all that had happened to Julian since their parting at Turin. "Constantius," said the deposed tribune, "shows a little more generosity towards his nephew, and has now

given him an army of ten or twelve thousand legionaries, but still, by way of keeping him under surveillance, he has sent along Barbazio, who is at the head of a force about three times as numerous. That Barbazio is an insignificant fellow, a mere tool of the eunuchs, and ready to fall into any plans they concoct. And yet with only that handful of men Cæsar has done wonders and shown his splendid valor. He has rescued Cologne from the Franks, he has put a stop to their incursions on our territory, has stood a vigorous siege at Sens with admirable spirit, and he is now carrying on a very active campaign against the Alemanni, on the banks of the Rhine."

Julian won indeed a brilliant victory in this last campaign against the Alemanni, whom he completely routed near Argentoratum—the modern Strasburg—and took their leader, Cnodomarus, prisoner. Tigranes had reached the camp of Julian on the eve of this great battle, in which he had the satisfaction of sharing the glory of the victory. Though the hour of Tigranes' arrival at the quarters of Julian found the young commander in the midst of a multitude of most pressing cares, for he was making the preparations for the next day's engagement, still he would not allow his friend to be detained a moment, but ordered him to be admitted at once. And indeed the moment was precisely the one in which he felt particularly anxious to know what was the fortune promised by the oracle at Carrhae. After the first warm greetings

of friendship, Julian took Tigranes aside, though not without the ever-present Oribasius, and in a tone of deep emotion asked him:

"What about the letter?"

"It was delivered."

"And what answer."

"Here it is." And he handed to Cæsar the white parchment folded and sealed. Julian hastily opened the important document, and found that it contained only two Greek hexameters to this effect:

"The mighty tree shall fall that towered to the skies,
And soon, where once it stood, the lowly reed shall rise."

"Divine response! Most happy augury!" cried Oribasius, clapping his hands.

"Thanks to Diana of Carrhae!" said Julian, with a look of intense satisfaction: "Eternal thanks! My confidence was not vain, the more men persecute me, the more the gods protect me. Praise and glory to the twin-sister of Apollo! And thanks to you, my friend Tigranes!"

The real pleasure which Tigranes felt at having done something that could draw such expressions of joy and gratitude from Julian, was marred by a sentiment of pity which he could not repress when he saw the importance attached by the young Cæsar to what he considered a piece of worse than childish folly. Still, he could not bring himself to utter a refusal to any request of Julian, and, in spite of his great desire to return to the

East as soon as possible, he consented to go, for the present, to Milan in the service of his imperial patron.

The late victories won by Julian had aroused the enthusiasm of his legions to such a pitch that, after his last success, they had even hailed him as Emperor. This display of feeling on the part of the troops might prove fatal to the young Commander, for the court-spies whom Constantius always took care to keep in his nephew's suite, would naturally report such an event as a proof that Julian had designs upon the imperial throne. If their account happened to work conviction in the mind of the Emperor, Julian's life would be in imminent peril at any moment. To avert the threatening danger, Julian determined to use the help of Tigranes and some other equally clever friends, who should go to Milan and do what they could to clear the Emperor's mind of all suspicion. Tigranes would much rather have avoided this delay, but when he considered the great importance of this affair to his friend and patron, who asked the favor of him as one really dependent upon him, and reflected that he might look for some considerable return when Cæsar should become master of the empire, he set aside his reluctance and agreed to delay his journey until he should have done what he could at Milan to avert the dangers which threatened Julian. He now began to indulge his fancy with thoughts of future greatness; perhaps he might yet be Governor of

Mesopotamia, then Pro-Consul of Syria, and finally Prefect of the East—all which golden visions turned out to be mere dreams, as we shall see. By way of greater security in carrying out his plans, he consulted Jovian, who was still with Julian. Jovian heartily approved of all his designs, adding that "he knew very well that Julian had an eye on the imperial crown, but as for any such thing as treachery, there was as yet none, except on the part of Barbazio and of Constantius himself, who was, with disgraceful perfidy, playing double with those whom he ought to trust. Valentinian was the first of the victims of that infamous perfidy. Go, go, Tigranes," he added with earnestness, "and counteract the effect of those calumnies! But before starting, would you not do me a favor too?"

"Certainly; what is it?"

"A very worthy man, a fellow-countryman of mine, is now groaning in chains for no greater crime than simply having claimed his discharge. I cannot help considering such treatment as most barbarous, especially since the poor man has served his full term, and now desires to withdraw from public life and to become a monk. Would you not say a word in his behalf to Julian, who inflicted the punishment? His name is Martin"—

"Martin! A Pannonian, is he not? I know him, a decurion of the veterans."

"The same."

"Yes; I know him very well. He escorted

Valentinian to Lyons, and myself from Lyons to the camp. Certainly I shall plead strongly for him with Julian. But how could Julian ever put gyves upon so worthy a man?"

Jovian shrugged his shoulders; but after a moment's hesitation, he continued: "I will tell you how it happened. The day after the last battle, Julian was preparing to pursue the Alemanni; and in order to put the troops in good spirits he distributed the pay in advance, with extra rations better than common, and treated the soldiers to military games until the hour for starting. Martin had been put on duty in a squadron of cavalry belonging to the body-guard, and was therefore one of the first to be called up to receive his share from the hand of Julian. It was very generally known that he had already asked for his discharge, and as soon as his name was called, his companions all looked on with silent expectation to see what he would do. He stepped out from his place and marched up to where Cæsar was standing, but instead of extending his hand, like the others, to receive the money, he stood respectfully before his commander and said, in a firm but respectful manner, 'Most noble Cæsar, now that I have served you faithfully, I ask that I may in future be allowed to serve God. I leave these gifts to those who will remain in the army, for by accepting them I should be engaging to follow you to new fields, whereas I have resolved to serve hereafter only under the standard of Jesus Christ.'

"Julian's countenance changed, a dark scowl settled upon his brow, and with ill-dissembled rage he exclaimed: 'Coward, you are afraid to meet the Alemanni face to face. That is the hypocritical piety which calls you from the army.'

"'Let facts show,' replied Martin, with the same respectful firmness, 'whether it is cowardice or faith which moves me. Set me in the front of the battle without sword or buckler, and armed with only the Sign of the Cross, and I shall dare to march into the midst of the enemy.' *

"At these words, Julian, with a scoffing laugh, turned to an officer who stood by him, and said, sneeringly, 'See that this credulous poltroon be put in irons and kept under strict guard.' And so it happens that Martin is in chains by Julian's order."

"Well," said Tigranes again, "I shall speak to Julian about the matter; and I shall do so all the more willingly because Martin would not accept any compensation from me for his escort, though I may now be able to make him one much more considerable than I expected, poor fellow!"

Tigranes was as good as his word, and as Julian was too much in need of his friend's services just then to refuse him a request so easily granted, Martin was released from his confinement and from

* "Si hoc ignaviae adscribitur, non fidei, crastina die ante aciem inermis adstabo, et in nomine Domini Jesu, signo crucis, non clypeo protectus aut galea, hostium cuneos penetrabo securus." Sulp. Sev., *Vita B. Martini*, n. 4, p. 162.

military service. It will not be amiss to state here, that Martin, immediately after his release, went to Poitiers and placed himself under the direction of the Holy Bishop Hilary. We find him mentioned, a little later, in Church history, as the great Bishop of Tours, mighty in miraculous works and one of the most illustrious Saints of his time.

Tigranes went to Milan and succeeded in disarming the suspicions awakened against Julian. This duty done, he turned his mind once more to the East, whither his heart was calling him; but true to his promise of not returning until his soul should have been purified by the laver of regeneration, he set about preparing himself for that important ceremony. Following the advice of Martin, whom he had consulted, and out of devotion to the memory of Placidus, who had received baptism there, he set out at once for Rome.

XII.

ROME.

HAD Julian been sure of succeeding in the attempt, he could have been easily induced to rebel against Constantius at any moment, and thus make himself master of the Roman world. But he knew very well that his life hung by a thread which Constantius held, and which he could cut whenever he pleased; and therefore, just as he feigned to be a Christian, though an idolater at heart, in order to save his life and his hopes of future sovereignty, so now he displayed the deepest respect and submission toward Constantius, to remove the suspicions of which he feared the consequences. It occurred to him that it might further his object to send to Constantius, as a token of homage, king Cnodomarus, whom he had taken, it will be remembered, in the battle before Strasburg. The mission of Tigranes, which has also been mentioned, was to accompany the guard which conveyed the royal captive to Milan, but especially to disarm any suspicion harbored at the Court against Julian. This stroke of policy took better than either Julian or Tigranes ventured to hope. The representative of the victorious Cæsar was well received at court, not only by

Eusebia Augusta, but even by Constantius himself, who accepted with great satisfaction this mark of respect from his nephew, and gave every indication of a complete absence of all suspicion concerning him.

Tigranes lost no time in notifying Julian of the complete success of his mission, assuring him, at the same time, that he had every reason to hope for good treatment at the hands of the Empress, who was always on the alert to baffle every court intrigue against him. Constantius, he added, was wholly taken up with his plans and negotiations to bring about a peace with Persia, though it was not possible that any arrangement could be arrived at; he might be certain, therefore, that Constantius would very soon set out for Constantinople and thence proceed to Asia. This last piece of news was most acceptable to Julian, who felt that his chances of making a successful move towards the imperial throne would increase in proportion as Constantius increased the distance between himself and Gaul.

During his short stay in Milan, Tigranes did not fail to make several visits to Hormisdas, whom he now knew to be his uncle, though, true to the promises made to King Sapor, he never breathed a word about the relationship existing between them. Hormisdas always received him most kindly, urged him not to delay his baptism, and moreover furnished him with letters to some of the noblest families in Rome whose friendship and hospitality

would be most beneficial to him during his sojourn in that city. While visiting Hormisdas, Tigranes often met there a young man, apparently about twenty-three or four years of age, called Sextius Anicius Petronius Probus. His noble birth and his alliance with the most illustrious Roman houses had already secured him posts of honor and distinction, and though not yet baptized himself, he was always regarded as a Christian, because his family was one of the most pious of the Christian households. The two young men seemed to have at once conceived a great esteem for each other, which grew stronger the more they saw of each other at the villa of Hormisdas.

Meanwhile Constantius, who was as full of vanity as he was deficient in sound judgment, sent laurelled letters to the Senate proclaiming in a strain of puerile boasting, the capture of Cnodomarus as if it had been an exploit of his own, and announcing that he would send the captive monarch to Rome, that he might there atone, by perpetual imprisonment, for the war he had waged against the Republic, but especially that the sight of a king in chains might recall to the Romans the triumphs of Augustus. Probus was selected by Constantius to conduct Cnodomarus to Rome, and to hand over the distinguished prisoner with all solemnity to the Roman Senate. He took this occasion to propose to invite Tigranes to accompany him to Rome, and to share his hospitality as long as he might choose to remain in the city, an offer which Tigranes gladly

accepted; and during this journey their muutal esteem ripened into a warm and lasting friendship.*

A little after three, on a bright autumn afternoon, the village of Saxa Rubra, now the first gate, about nine miles from Rome on the Flaminian Road, was aroused by the entrance of a body of Roman troops, consisting of foot-soldiers, cavalry and a baggage train. It was the detachment bringing the ill-fated king of the Alemanni to Rome. The car which bore the king was surrounded by a troop of cavalry, the decurion in command riding close by the side of his prisoner, while before and behind marched two companies of foot-soldiers. The chariots of the imperial officers followed, conspicuous among them, for its rich appointments and brilliant escort, was that of Anicius Probus, in which sat Tigranes at the side of his friend.

"See," exclaimed Probus, pointing to the arches of a noble aqueduct which they were approaching, "in the stone of that monument of the Augustan period, you may read the name of this place, famous in our history. How often have the fortunes of Rome been decided on this very field!"

"I see nothing more striking than a battlemented wall of reddish friable sandstone, with cornices of a harder rock."

* Probus claritudine generis et potentia et opum amplitudine cognitus orbi romano, per quem universum pene patrimonia sparsa possedit. AMM. MARCELL. xxvii. 11.

"Precisely; and from that very tufa which you see here, comes the great name of Saxa Rubra."*

"Saxa Rubra! then this is the very field which witnessed the great battle between Constantine and Maxentius?"

"And hence I said that the fortunes of Rome had more than once been decided on this very spot, not only in the Veientian war and in the hazardous career of Vespasian."

"Here then," cried Tigranes with deep emotion, "my father fought beneath the Labarum! Here he interposed his own breast to shield the life of Constantine. But then the great shrine of Peter cannot be far from here, according to what my father used to say. In what direction must I seek it?"

"The Basilica of the Blessed Peter is directly in front of us, and we might now see the roof of its central nave, but for this little hill which we shall soon have crested."

A few minutes after these last words had been uttered they had surmounted the hill, and the city of Rome stood before them in all its completeness.

"See," said Probus, directing the attention of his friend, "there is the Basilica of the Blessed Peter, where you say that your father was baptized; that lofty temple in yonder valley with the great esplanade just before it, through which passes this very triumphal way on which we are now riding."

* Red Rocks.

Tigranes gazed long and fixedly on the noble temple, admiring its great height and the long rows of windows which lined the sides of the central nave. But Probus roused him from rapt contemplation:

"Come, come!" said he, "to-morrow you may examine the Basilica, but now let me introduce you by degrees to the Eternal City. The spot whereon that splendid temple now stands was once occupied by the Circus of Nero,* and yonder, not far off, you have the Porch of Caius Caligula stretching along towards the Tiber, but separated from the stream by the remains which you see there of the once beautiful imperial gardens. It was there that the gentle Caligula used to take his recreation after dinner. He would order the gardens to be illuminated, and then by way of pastime he would witness some decapitations or the scourging of a few senators, which amusements he sometimes varied by running a knight or two through the body, or ordering some Roman lady to be burned in his presence. It was within that porch and in Nero's Circus that the first flames of persecution against the Christians broke forth. There the neophytes of the Apostle Peter were clothed with the skins of animals and cast into the arena, to be the sport of savage and hungry beasts, or of men worse than the very beasts. Hoary old men

* Tacitus speaks of this piece of ground as "clausum valle Vaticana Spatium"

and venerable matrons, dressed in the hides of deer or of heifers, were thrown before the lions as they came forth foaming with rage from their dens; innocent boys and girls sewed up in the skins of wolves were torn to pieces by fierce hounds urged on by their still less gentle keepers, amid the applause of a populace drunk with the feast of blood, and so the butchery went on until the darkness brought it to an end, and then the great crowd poured out from all parts of the vast circus by its many *vomitoria.* From the bloody sports of the amphitheatre the savage throng passed to the enjoyment of other sports even more barbarous; they filled the gardens of Nero, where the walks, the drives and the porches down to the Tiber, were lighted up by human torches, a new style of martyrdom which Nero had devised for the Christians. These victims were wrapped in pitch or other highly combustible matters and tied to stakes; then fire was applied first at the top of the head, in order that the burning might last longer, to prolong the fiendish pleasure which the Emperor took in riding rapidly through the gardens to enjoy the inhuman sight and the cheers of the people, worthy slaves of such a master."

"Were it not," said Tigranes, with feeling, "that I myself witnessed in Ctesiphon the excesses of idolatrous fury, when raging against Christianity, I should have found it hard to believe your words. But was not Peter himself one of Nero's victims?"

"Yes, he was."

"But I thought that the sacred remains of the Blessed Apostle had always remained on the very spot of his martyrdom."

"And so they have."

"What!" cried Tigranes, turning upon his friend with a look of great astonishment, "was the Apostle buried in Nero's Circus?"

"Not exactly in the circus, but very near the circus; in the Temple of Apollo."*

"But even that choice place seems to me very strange."

"Why?"

"I have always remarked that the Christians have a great horror of the temples of the idols, and I cannot conceive that they should choose such a place for the burial of Blessed Peter."

"To understand the reason, one must place himself in the condition of the Christians of those days. Had they been able to find another place, they would certainly have preferred it. But Providence, no doubt, secretly directed their choice, that the last resting place of the Apostle might not be invaded, and his venerated ashes scattered to the winds. In spite of Nero's hatred of the Chris-

* Anastasius asserts that St. Peter "was buried on the Aurelian Road, in the temple of Apollo. Constantine built a basilica in honor of the Blessed Peter in the temple of Apollo, near the palace of Nero on the Vatican mount, hard by the Triumphal Space." St. Jerome, who lived at the period of our narrative, and was then residing in Rome, confirms this statement, declaring that "the Blessed Peter was buried near the Triumphal Way."

tian name, many fervent disciples of the Crucified had found their way into his very palace; and it is likely that these selected the spot precisely in order to elude all suspicion. It was reserved for the great Constantine to clear the spot of the profanities of paganism, and erect this noblest of basilicas, that from his tomb the glorious Apostle might command the Triumphal Way."

The Triumphal Way, which the tomb is here said to command, used to pass where now is the grand piazza of St. Peter's, and over the very spot occupied by the obelisk and the fountains. The same line thus cuts in two different places the colonnade which borders the piazza. It is well known that, on the feast of *Corpus Christi*, the Vicar of Christ bears his Lord under the Sacramental veil beneath this colonnade. And that Lord, after crushing the pride of the Roman Empire by the power of His cross alone, now passes in a triumph of charity along the same road, which was so often the scene of the bloody and barbarous triumphs of heathenism.

XIII.

THE RETURN OF LIBERIUS TO ROME.

CONSTANTIUS having sent the holy Pontiff Liberius into exile, sought to allay the indignation of the Romans and of the faithful in general, by confiding the government of the Church to an anti-pope, selected with artful malice by the Emperor himself. Felix—for that was his name—had enjoyed the partial confidence of Liberius, and the choice was calculated to betray the simple-minded into the belief that he was acceptable to the saintly Pontiff. On the other hand, he was a weak man, who would easily yield to the Arian faction, and therefore be a fitting tool in the hands of Constantius. But the Romans, and particularly the noblest matrons of the capitol, were not to be hoodwinked by fair appearances. Felix and his few adherents found themselves deserted; and God, who had tried the fidelity of His servant by ten years of exile, wished to console him by recalling him to his See about a year before his decease.

Not long before the arrival of Tigranes in Rome, the Emperor Constantius himself felt a

desire to visit that august city, into which he had never yet set foot. He went thither to admire its grandeurs, but perhaps still more to be admired and to display his power after his own peculiar fashion. His first wish was gratified far beyond his own expectations; and he himself confessed on his return to Milan, that, however much report had trumpeted the grandeurs of Rome, it fell far short of the reality. His other wish was doomed to sore disappointment; so far from being an object of admiration, the affectation of his manners made him the laughing stock of the Roman rabble. Ammianus Marcellinus says of him: "Augustus was ungainly in person and stiff in deportment. Even when he passed through the highest doorways, he doubled up his stunted little body. He held his neck as rigid as if it had no joints, and never turned his face either towards the right or the left. When he whirled his fiery chariot along the highways, he was never seen to nod, to wave his hand or raise it to his face. After examining the curiosities, he departed in admiration, and complained that report, which always exaggerates, had failed to do simple justice to the marvels of imperial Rome.* Even his despotic craving to signalize his authority had for once to yield to the wishes and representations of his subjects. He would fain have left the holy Pope Liberius to waste his life away in exile, and would have foisted his creature Felix upon the faithful, but his scheme

* Amm. Marc., xvi. 10.

was doomed to fail. We shall not ourselves relate how it came to grief, but leave it to be told by Tigranes, in a letter from Rome to the East. After stating that he was among the Catechumens, and that his instructor was a holy priest of great learning and prudence, Damasus by name,* he adds: "In this dwelling house of the Probi, whose guest I am, a meeting was held composed of the most distinguished ladies of the metropolis. It will be sufficient to give you a few names. Besides Anicia Faltonia, the youthful wife of Petronius, who was the moving spirit, there were present the Emperor's sister Constantia Augusta, the Olibrias, the Marcellas, the Paulas, and others of patrician rank. They agreed among themselves not to let Constantius leave Rome without having brought about the restoration of the Holy Father. I have this from Faltonia Proba herself, who related the occurrence in the following words: 'When Constantius was in Rome, we assembled in that hall to deliberate about the return of our Holy Father, then an exile at Berea, and we agreed to go in a body to make the request. Constantius after twisting and turning, after proposing half-way measures and compromises, replied that he would advise with his bishops, to see if there were any way of satisfying us. We were firm and insisted on his setting the thing at rest immediately by an honest *yes*. Constantia Augusta, the Emperor's sister, who is

* St. Damasus, the immediate successor of Liberius in the chair of Peter.

devotedly attached to the holy Pope, likewise spoke out and assured him that, if he wished to plunge all Rome into an ecstasy of joy, he must at once recall our Father; that if he granted our petition his visit to the eternal city would forever remain in benediction, and on the contrary, if he started without restoring the Pope to his flock, his presence among us would be remembered with grief by the whole Christian world, now deprived of its chief Pastor.'"

"Deprived of its chief Pastor," interrupted Constantius, "have I not given you Felix?"

"'We might say *yes*, but in this city not one communicates with him. He sings mass, it is true; but he is alone to hear it. His entrance into a church is a signal for the faithful to leave it.'

"'The poor man not seeing any means of escaping from the toils we had thrown around him, imagined that he could satisfy our demands by recalling Liberius, while at the same time he left Felix at Rome. But the scheme miscarried, and it is well for you to know it, that when you return to the east, you may be able to give the true version of the whole affair.'

"My baptism," continues Tigranes, "will not take place before Easter, and I did not wish to keep you waiting without giving you at least the substance of what I myself have witnessed during these days, forever memorable for the return of Pope Liberius. But, mark you, I have not time to write you a book on the subject; you must be con-

tent with the barest outlines; the incidents, and the thousand little details worth knowing, I shall leave until we meet. After the appeal made by the Roman matrons, Constantius spread the report that on a certain day the decree recalling the bishop Liberius would be read in the *Circus Maximus*. The Circus was not able to contain the crowds that poured in from every side. Constantius made a sign to the public crier, and forthwith so profound a silence ensued, that not even a syllable of the decree was lost in all that vast enclosure. The decree began: 'Flavius Constantius Pius, most happy, most august, &c., &c., ordains that Liberius and Felix be the Bishops of mighty Rome, and that they govern the church in common.' Scarcely had these words been read, when the silence gave place to a deafening cry of voices exclaiming: 'No! never! never! among Christians there are no factions, one only God, one Christ, one Bishop.' Yells and groans and hisses rent the air on every side, and fell deafening upon the ears of Constantius. Whether he was overawed by so unexpected a demonstration and apprehended a repetition of an outburst which made it unmistakably clear that the common people did not yield to the patricians in their esteem for Liberius, or whether he was ambitious to leave Rome amid the plaudits of his subjects—certain it is, that he announced his mind to recall Liberius without insisting on the objectionable clause of his first decree. He kept his word, and the Pope having received the decree,

set out immediately for Rome, where he met with a reception very different from that of his persecutor, Constantius. The people went as far as the Milvian bridge, and even beyond it, to lead him back in triumph, the clergy meanwhile chanting psalms, the children scattering flowers on the highways, and the matrons waving their handkerchiefs from their litters. All cried at the top of their voices: 'Long live Liberius! Holy Father bless us. Hosanna to Liberius the orthodox.' He proceeded to his palace of the Lateran. Felix had left it, some say by order of Augustus. The whole city partook in the rejoicings. On the following day there was an immense gathering in the Constantinian Basilica on the Vatican, where the Pope celebrated the holy mysteries over the tomb of Peter. There was no need for the masters of ceremonies to cry themselves hoarse in announcing to the people the beginning of the homily. The basilica is the largest church in the world, and yet it was too small. After the Gospel, the Pope descended from the platform of the altar and prayed for a while on bended knees; seven deacons accompanied him to the *Ambo*, where they remained standing with their faces turned towards the faithful. The Pope alone ascended the steps slowly, and with his mitre on his head blessed the assembled crowd, saying, 'The grace and the peace of God the Father and of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.' Then from the stalls of the priests, and from the lips of the people broke the united

response: 'And with thy spirit.' It seemed to me as if the most spirited responses came from the places occupied by the virgins and the matrons. The Holy Father opened the sacred volume, made the sign of the cross with his hand, and seated himself. The audience did the same. I observed every motion; for it was the first time I heard a bishop address the people. This sermon, which lasted close upon an hour, was all about the necessity of adoring Jesus Christ the Son of God, one only God with the Father and the Holy Ghost. He inveighed against the Arians, frequently repeated the Greek words *Homoousios** and *Homoiousios*, which now-a-days are on the lips of all who profess some knowledge of Greek. But to return to Liberius. Sometimes he rose, most commonly he sat; but he spoke with the authority of a father among his children, mingled with something of princely majesty, and he was listened to in respectful silence. At every pause of the venerable speaker you might have heard the noise made by the pens of the scribes who tried to keep up with his words. I had looked forward to an invective against Felix; not a word escaped the speaker. At the close, he published some holidays which I do not remember now, inculcated the necessity of denouncing heretics to the Church, recommended

* *Homoousios* (ὁμοούσιος) signifies *consubstantial*, or *having the same essence*, and is opposed to *Homoiousios* (ὁμοιούσιος), that is, *similar in essence*. The latter was introduced by one class of Arians to do away with the dogma of the Trinity.

almsdeeds to the poor, recited a prayer with his hearers, and concluded with a parting blessing. One loud cry of approval rose from all the throng, handkerchiefs waved and hands applauded the orator.* 'That is the faith of Peter! that is our faith! . . . . let Arius be anathema! . . . Liberius is orthodox!' The Pope strove in vain to quiet them; he was only fanning the fire. They did not cease until he had returned to the altar of mysteries. The rest of the liturgy I did not see, because at the conclusion of the sermon the deacon dismissed those who do not take part in the *secrets.*

"Let us come to political news. Petronius Probus has been appointed Proconsul of Africa. He will start soon, but he wishes Faltonia with their little son to wait for a better season before following him. She will probably put off her journey till Easter, the time set apart for my baptism. The Emperor is just now at Milan; but friends write to me from there that he means to return to Constantinople, and that in his consistory there is question about renewing the war against the Persians; some pretend that hostilities have actually begun. In case the war should make your stay at home unpleasant, withdraw to Antioch, whither Pistos has been directed to send all my chattels subject to your control. In Gaul, Julian is gaining one

* These marks of approval publicly given in the Church, and the manner of giving them, as well as the title of *Holy Father* applied to the Pope in this letter, are in perfect harmony with the time.

victory after another, and all who come from that quarter praise him to the skies.

"I must conclude, because the couriers are in the *Atrium* below, only waiting for my letter to start. Farewell! farewell!"

When Tigranes was writing this letter, he little thought to what dangers his faith would be exposed, how long his baptism would be delayed, and under what circumstances it would finally be received.

XIV.

REBELLION AND FLIGHT.

THE haughtiness of Constantius was punished even more severely than by the triumph of the Holy Pontiff. He was made the very instrument in the hands of God for the exaltation of His Vicar whom he had persecuted, and he was forced to act with Pope Liberius the part which King Assuerus compelled Aman to perform to Mardocheus. But, as if that were not enough to humble the pride of the Arian Emperor, his rebellion against the Church was punished by another rebellion. Julian, as soon as he knew that Constantius had departed for the East, relying upon the military renown gained by

his victories, proclaimed himself Emperor, and raised the standard of revolt against his uncle. Constantius wished to give two Popes to the Church, and to maintain himself as sole Emperor of the Roman Empire. Instead of this, he was obliged to leave the government of the Church to the one lawful Pope, and to see his own empire divided under the command of two heads. He who lays hands upon the Church and upon the Vicar of its Divine Founder, sooner or later suffers for it. After Constantius, who was not the first to prove this truth, his worthy nephew, Julian, paid a greater penalty; and so, one after the other, as many as have followed their example have come to a bad end. We have no need here to turn to ancient history; more than one ringleader among the authors of the present trials of the Church and of the Holy Father, have met a just retribution. And for those who are still spared, nevertheless, the day of reckoning will come.

But let us go on with our narrative. The first news of the rebellion arrived in Rome, not from Gaul but from Africa. Tigranes thus wrote in another letter: "Faltonia came to me alone (something she never did before,) and, pale and trembling, read me a few lines of a letter she had received from her husband, Petronius Probus, in Africa, who had sent it to her by a special messenger, to prove it worthy of all confidence. 'If Tigranes is with you,' wrote Petronius, 'let him depart instantly, and with as much speed as pos-

sible, and let him not stop in any land subject to Constantius Augustus. The most peremptory orders have arrived in Africa to arrest all the partisans of Julian in the country, and to send them in chains to Antioch. If Tigranes can reach the Alps, let him do so before the passes are guarded. Only when he has crossed them will he be safe from torments and death. He is known at the court as being hand-and-glove with Julian. And, in truth, in the matter of treason, Constantius is no respecter of persons. Even in the case of Senators, a slight suspicion is enough to hasten him to extreme measures.' Finally, there were orders to Faltonia to burn the letter as soon as she had read it; and, by way of receipt, to give to the bearer an answer, in which she should say that the money and the wine asked for would be attended to, and should direct him to carry it back without delay.

"I could not write these things," continued Tigranes, "unless I had a trustworthy person to whom I could give the letter. He is one of my agents, sent to me here by Pistos, for our affairs. He will carry the letter himself. Have no anxiety about me; I feel so little afraid, that I am going into the Forum, to hear if there are any reports about Julian. If the orders from Africa had already arrived here, I should have been arrested before this, unless my staying in the house of Probus has removed any suspicion about me. At all events, before beginning my journey, I will find out about

this business. Now I am going out. . . . . I have just come in from the Forum to finish this letter. It is all quite true. The advice of Probus is well founded. Constantius knew beforehand what was coming; he had good spies. Two hours ago it was announced in the Senate that Julian had assumed the purple. The *coup d'etat* which many foresaw, has fallen. Great confusion among the Senators—the news spreads like wild-fire—nothing else talked of—I must be off at once—suspicion about me, which has not as yet shown itself, might break out at any moment. What a lucky thing that the message of Probus came in time. O, the happy day of my baptism, which I thought so near! who can tell how far off it may be? Write to me at Paris, whither I fly. May God help me to elude the scent of the blood-hounds of Augustus! Avail yourself of the services of the bearer of this letter, to whom I give orders to do your bidding in all things, without thinking of cost. Farewell."

Tigranes, as we may well think, lost no time in leaving Rome for Gaul. At every step, and every resting-place, from the Tiber to the Alps, he ran the risk of his life. He was, withal, accompanied by the prayers of his friends in Rome, and by those of the saintly maiden, Thecla, his future spouse; and he succeeded in reaching a place of safety without any mishap. As soon as he set foot in Gaul, danger no longer threatened his life, but his faith, instead, was put upon trial. Tigranes, although he knew the tactics of Julian, was, never-

theless, so captivated by the new Cæsar, that it was impossible for him to break away from his party. He deceived himself by trusting to the good sense and natural rectitude of Julian. "The young Emperor," he thought, "granting that he has a weakness for the gods, will never persecute the Church, as his uncle has continued to do. Better, a thousand times, a pagan prince, just and faithful, than these tyrants with false faces, who make Christianity the instrument of their policy and the cloak of their tyranny. Their protection was as bad as the hatred of a Tiberius. What did the Church gain from Constantius, the juggler of synods and of confessions of faith, so desirous to have himself called the pious and devoted defender of religion? Was it not he who had persecuted the priests, banished the Bishops, reviled the Pope of Rome, and left no stone unturned by which he might change the faith of the Church? Did not Faltonia, Damasus, and Liberius himself say the same thing?" With these thoughts in his mind, and with the ardent desire to soon see and salute his friend, the new Augustus, Tigranes stopped at Briançon, before resuming his route for Paris.

It happened that a poor pilgrim passed the night in the coach-house of the inn at which Tigranes was stopping. He was also from Rome, whither he had gone in hopes of meeting the holy Bishop Hilary of Poitiers, who was returning from Constantinople, but not finding Hilary, he was on his way to Gaul where the Bishop had already ar-

rived at his See. Great was the surprise of Tigranes and of the pilgrim, when, on the point of leaving Briançon the following morning, they recognized each other. The pilgrim, who was no other than Martin, recognized Tigranes at first sight, but was not so soon recognized by him, wearied as he was by the fatigues of the way and worn out by penance, and the sufferings he had undergone in Illyria and in Milan, at the hands of the Arians.

As soon, however, as Tigranes recognized Martin, he did not hesitate to run to meet him and to embrace him, although he was dressed as a gentleman and Martin as a beggar. Abandoning for the present all thought of his journey, Tigranes brought his beloved friend into his apartments, and began to put many questions to him about matters and events that were taking place. But Martin was not in a position to fully satisfy all his inquiries. Tigranes, in his turn, told Martin all about his stay in the Eternal City, and the wonderful things he saw there, and what a pain it was for him, after almost reaching the point of receiving holy baptism, to be obliged to abandon everything, and to betake himself to a precipitate flight, and that too with death at his heels.

He opened to him his design to seek safety with Julian, there to wait for a happy opportunity of recommencing the duties of a catechumen, and to fulfil in everything his firm resolution. Martin grieved like a brother over the misfortunes of his

friend, and especially at the delay of his baptism. He could have wished to have taken him with him into his solitude in order to finish the good already commenced; but he saw too clearly, as a good reader of hearts, that the eagerness to see Julian, bright in his new purple, would have more hold on the heart of his friend than any other consideration. He therefore, after praising his design, contented himself by inviting him to put off for a few hours his journey to Paris, and to turn a very little out of his way just to see with his own eyes such a marvel in the Christian world as was Hilary. "He will have for you," said Martin, "wholesome counsels which will strengthen you in the faith you have embraced, and good advice as to how to conduct yourself in the Court of Julian."

Tigranes agreed to this plan. Both mounted together in the same chariot. What a wonder to see a citizen so richly dressed, in familiar intercourse with a poorly clad beggar! They turned towards Poitiers, passing the time in lively and affectionate conversation. The holy man did not fail in the office of charity which offered itself. Full of the Spirit of God, and at the same time a master in conversation, he began at once to speak of the manifold calamities which afflicted the Church in those unhappy days: how the Arians had deceived a great number of the Bishops assembled at Rimini and in other Councils, and how the most of them had found that they had subscribed formularies perfectly false, which they

thought were Catholic; and finally how Liberius had to steer the ship of the Church through the midst of numberless rocks in order to reach the haven of safety. Martin expressed his hope that the Bishop of Poitiers would raise in Gaul the sign of the new life of the holy faith of Nice. He said that for himself he had formed the resolution to live as a hermit near Hilary; and that it was of the greatest moment for all, amid so many attacks upon the truth, to stand by the Bishops who were in union with the chair of Peter, if they did not wish to risk their eternal salvation.

Tigranes on the contrary, who had no thought of the affairs of the universal Church, being content only to advance himself in the knowledge of religion, spoke of nothing else than the tyranny of Constantius, and the hopes he placed in Julian Augustus. The prudent Martin let all this pass without signs either of disapproval or of encouragement.

At the inns on the road they heard on every side the praises of Julian; not indeed from grave and thoughtful citizens, but from idlers who thronged to hear news from the travellers, and overwhelmed them with a thousand questions about the movements in Italy, which they fancied were great and formidable, against the new Emperor of Gaul. Martin carefully refrained from uttering a word on these political topics, but Tigranes continued: "The Alps are occupied, the passes seized, the gorges fortified—swarms of foragers in

quest of corn and provisions—couriers and spies running everywhere—it is lucky for me that I found the means to reach the domain of Julian—not a conveyance is to be had. At the foot of the Alps and in Emilia, the legions are in motion as if war had been already declared."

"All right," answered the crowd; "Julian, too, has his army, and a faithful one; and that it knows how to fight, those on the other side of the Alps will find out." And then, "Death to Constantius!" cried some, while others shouted in their turn, "Long live Julian Augustus!" Tigranes echoed back these cries, and was more and more on fire with enthusiasm for Julian.

Martin almost lost hopes of doing any good to Tigranes. He recommended him to God in his heart, with deep compassion. He did not, however, neglect, when they were alone, to remonstrate with him on the subject, justly, and yet sweetly and kindly. "My brother," he said, "do not let yourself be dazzled by the rising sun. Oftentimes a bright dawn is followed by a cloudy day and a storm before evening. Be cautious, examine, watch; be on your guard, and be ready to draw back in case of necessity. In these tumults in public affairs, the young are often entrapped without knowing it." These views, however, had no effect at all on the mind of Tigranes, to whom every hour was as a thousand years until he could see the new Cæsar in person and espouse his fortunes. Hence, Tigranes entered

Poitiers with the firm resolve to depart as soon as he had saluted the holy Bishop Hilary.

XV.

A VISIT TO ST. HILARY.

THE venerable Martin, with his charitable purpose always in view, was convinced that Hilary could, better than any one else, satisfy Tigranes as to the real position and views of Julian; and accordingly he seized every occasion as they journeyed on, to strengthen the confidence and reverence of his young friend for the saintly bishop. "The holy prelate," he said, "has suffered banishment rather than yield a single point to the pretensions of the Arians. In his exile he was the admiration of all the orthodox bishops; he detected and thwarted every plan of the heretics, and kept up the courage of the weaker brethren, and before his unflinching firmness the Emperor was at last forced to give way and recall him to his See, lest the further persecution of such a man should ruin all his own schemes in the East. In a word, Hilary is the Athanasius of the West."

Tigranes loved to see and to converse with great men, and the glowing colors in which Martin placed

the great bishop before him, filled him with an ardent desire of meeting Hilary, and but for the eagerness with which he longed to behold Julian in the splendor of his imperial purple, he would gladly have tarried at Poitiers, there to finish his probation as catechumen. But he could not brook such a delay. He entered the city full of high expectation and impatient to meet the Saint; and fortune favored his hopes sooner than he could have anticipated.

The sun was just setting, and Hilary was leaving the basilica, accompanied by some of his clergy, to return to his modest episcopal residence. The faithful thronged his path, eager to behold and to hail the father who had just been given back to them; some kissed his hand as he passed, others the hem of his mantle, thanking God that he was among them again. The poor came up confident of receiving some alms, mothers held up their little children for his blessing, and many besought him to enter their dwellings and lay his hands upon the sick, that they might recover. The good father received all these marks of his children's devotion with a simple and modest benevolence, smiling on all and sending every one away satisfied and consoled. Tigranes did not mingle with the crowd which pressed around the good bishop, but put off his first visit until the night, that he might enjoy the holy man's conversation more at leisure. Not so, Martin; when he saw, after so long and cruel a separation, the beloved

master of his soul, he could not help throwing himself at his feet in the very midst of the public street, and Hilary greeted him with the greeting which passes between Saints when they meet.

Tigranes waited till night had set in, to visit the bishop. He found him alone in his cell deeply engaged, as was his wont, in study and contemplation. A modest little lamp on a wooden stand at the side of the table, shed a mild, subdued light around the room, giving it the appearance of a sanctuary; the table was covered with rolls of parchment and letters, some in his own handwriting, some from bishops and saints who wrote from the East and from the West to ask counsel of the holy prelate. But the most prominent object of all, was a volume of the Sacred Writings, always open upon the bishop's table; this was the exhaustless armory whence he drew those thunderbolts of eloquence which thundered throughout Gaul and over the whole Christian world. The venerable old man was seated on a wooden chair, bending over the Sacred Volume; he held a pen over the sheet of *papyrus* that lay before him on the table, and so deeply was he absorbed in his work that he was wholly unaware of the entrance of a stranger, until Tigranes, drawing near in reverent silence, took his hand and pressed it to his lips. Hilary dropped his pen and turned to see who his visitor might be. "What do you want, my friend, at this hour?" he asked.

"I am a catechumen," answered Tigranes, "fly-

ing from Rome, and I only ask your blessing before setting out to finish my journey."

"The peace of our Lord be with you," said Hilary. "I know you already, for Martin, the holy martyr, has spoken to me of you."

"How! a martyr?" asked Tigranes.

"Yes, blessed martyr! He is fresh from his twofold martyrdom in Milan and in Illyricum. How many sufferings he has undergone, how generously he has shed his blood for Jesus Christ!"

"And he never spoke a word about all this during the whole journey we have made together."

"The servants of the Lord know that their sufferings are recorded by their Master, and that is all they ask. Neither should I myself have known aught of this, had not the news been sent me from there."

"What! And do those idolaters dare such things on Roman soil?"

"Ah! yes. The Barbarians are still in Roman territory; the Arians, these heretical priests in the pay of Augustus"—

"The name of Augustus was enough to startle Tigranes out of the reverential reserve he had until then maintained; and letting loose all the ill-will he bore the Emperor, he told Hilary of his hasty flight and dangerous journey, and how his hopes were all now centred in Julian, in whom he hoped to find the liberator of an enslaved empire. The gentle old man listened quietly to this outburst of youthful indignation, and after a moment's pause,

raising his head, which had been resting upon his hand, he sighed deeply and replied: "My son, the anger which seems to have mastered you, and which inspires such words as you have just now uttered, ill becomes one who is preparing to become a follower of Jesus Christ. Far more enviable is the lot of the victim than that of the persecutor. Remember that your just indignation may be vented, not against the persecutor of Tigranes, but against the persecutor of the Son of God. Respect the Sovereign, but hate, as heartily as you may, his impiety, for nowhere is impiety so odious as upon the throne. I may say even more—you should pray to God for such a hatred as a special favor; now especially that you are going to a Court. Believe me, it is not easy to keep the faith unswervingly amid the surroundings of a Court and the poisonous caresses of the enemies of God."

"The enemies of God! Venerable Father, do you reckon as an enemy of God the august Prince so lately proclaimed Emperor by the legions of Gaul?"

"No, my son, I do not. The new Augustus thus far gives occasion for fair hopes of the future; even the clergy seem to augur well from this bestowal of the purple. As for myself, I am willing to forget the heretical practices which have stained his past career, and to consider only the throne which God has given him, for I knew that the incapacity and dishonesty of Constantius—for the truth must be told—had placed Gaul in a most

critical condition, and Julian, according to all present appearances, seems desirous to become its restorer. And indeed Constantius cannot reasonably complain of this recent act of Julian's, for he himself came into power through treachery and murder."

"And Julian has at least obtained the purple," continued Tigranes, "without bloodshed and by the popular voice."

"Yes, yes, his friends have made the most of the popular voice; but they do not tell how he obtained it. However, I, as a Priest, have nothing to do with that; but since the common weal, they say, demands it, I am satisfied; and so I do not account him an enemy of God. The enemies of God are all round about him, and you will meet them at his Court. I know, on good authority, that he is always surrounded by sectaries from Greece and Asia, by men of the most desperate character, very brands of hell—they are the ones who will hound him on to the accomplishment of their dark designs, threatening while they feign to praise, and perverting him by every means known to their fertile ingenuity. Be cautious when you are among these men; associate with the Christians, let no one know who are your friends, stand in caution and fear. If ever you see that our new Augustus is entering upon the path traced out by his predecessor, fly from him as you would from a serpent; be not dazzled by the splendor of the purple or the lofty grandeur of the throne; the sin-

ner can never exalt himself so mightily as to make us forget that he is but dust of the earth. To-day his pride may tower to the skies—to-morrow no trace of it will be left."

"Do you then mistrust Julian? Do you really suspect him?" asked Tigranes, anxiously.

"My brother," answered the old man gently, "the future is in the hands of God, and God does not inspire me to prophesy. What I do know, is that Constantius has persecuted and is now persecuting the Church; and it may be that therein lies the hidden cause of this strong opposition to him in Gaul. Of Julian thus far I know no evil; of him I hear naught but Christian praise for his unquestioned justice. But the purple may turn a man's head, and we Christians, clergy and people—may God in his mercy spare us!—deserve new scourges rather than pardon and peace."

"Then you mistrust the good intentions of Augustus?"

"I do not look to the future."

"But you have your fears?"

"I have no fear. Kings are God's representatives on earth; their greatness and their power are measured by their piety and their justice. If they fall so low as to become representatives of Satan, their perfidy may kindle the fire of persecution; but, after all, their own glory is the first thing consumed by those flames, which are not long in sweeping away the imperial mantle and the crown. See how the star of Constantius is now fast sinking

from its zenith, rayless and inglorious. The Church may indeed suffer; she can never perish! Woe to him who lays a finger upon the spotless Spouse of Christ!"

Tigranes was cut to the quick by these words, which seemed to him clearly to breathe a deep distrust and suspicion injurious to Julian. But the great veneration universally felt towards Hilary, his wide-spread reputation for great learning, and the halo of a sanctity, attested by miracles, which ever surrounded him, forbade Tigranes to attack him openly. He mastered the feelings uppermost in his heart, and simply replied in a modest tone: "I feel very confident that the reign of Julian will bring salvation to the Church, that he will shake off the meddlesome influence of the eunuchs, and that never will Christianity have to complain of him, whatever may be his sentiments as an individual."

Hilary made no reply, but only heaved a deep sigh. Tigranes continued:

"I am quite sure, too, that in his Court I shall find no difficulty about practising the Christian religion, which I have embraced forever, and of which nothing on earth shall ever deprive me."

"Go, then," said Hilary, "go to Paris, since you have made up your mind so positively. May the angel of the Lord accompany you and strengthen you in your good resolutions. And since it will be good for you to have a counsellor ever with you, take this little book which I have just written

to be a guide and companion for both clergy and laity in these perilous times. My copyist has just brought me in four copies of it; this one shall be for you, keep it as a token of my love for you. Read it, study it carefully, and never depart from its spirit and principles, for it is not mine, but rather a little extract from the divine wisdom of this sacred volume."

Hilary took up from among the papers before him a little roll of parchment and handed it to Tigranes, who glanced at the title as he took it and read: *Against the Emperor Constantius.*

"It is a work against Constantius!" he exclaimed, with joyful surprise. "Good! it will be very acceptable to our new Augustus!"

"That was not my purpose in writing it," said Hilary, "I mean it as a defence of the Church of God against a persecutor, and I give it to you for yourself. And I will even say that you must change the name from Constantius to Julian, should you ever perceive that Julian is treading in the tracks of Constantius."

It was now rather late, and the turn which the conversation had taken in regard to the idol of his admiring affection disinclined Tigranes to prolong the interview; he accordingly rose to take his leave. He feared, moreover, that any further conversation might give occasion to the bishop to qualify or virtually retract the approbation given to the purpose expressed by Tigranes, of going to the court of Julian, whither his heart had already

preceded him on the wings of desire, and he kept studiously out of sight the fact that the approval had been given in a very doubtful way, and only because the ardent youth was hopelessly infatuated. So he went away, taking with him the holy bishop's blessing and his little book.

He found Martin awaiting his return in the atrium, and eager to know the result of the interview. It soon became evident to him that no material change had been brought about in his young friend's designs; but when he heard of the book received from Hilary, he pressed Tigranes very urgently to lend it to him for that night. And so with varied converse about the little work and other entertaining topics—for Martin, as we have said, was a perfect master of the art of conversation—they wended their way together to their common lodgings.

XVI.

IDEAS OF ST. HILARY.

THE fierce storm of revolution which has been shaking to pieces the old monarchies of Europe, and which seems now to be spending its fiercest rage on Italy, has brought out an occasional Decius, a Caligula, or a Maximian on a small scale; and we are becoming daily more familiar with the watchword of the revolutionary clubs and newspaper organs, "Death to the Priests! Down with religion! War to the bitter end against God and against His Christ!" That these tigers are in real earnest is sufficiently evident from the bloody tracks they have left in the streets of Paris, Madrid and Rome, and in a hundred other places.

Behind the common herd, jostling and crowding in fierce eagerness for their bloody prey, come the more elegant and sleek-skinned members of the fraternity, the refined secret-society men, deeply read in the wiles of diplomacy, and skilled in turning the very laws they despise to the compassing of their ends, with the ever-ready "Hail Master" on their lying lips; a brood of hypocrites, more guilty, more perfidious, more pernicious, a thou-

sand times, than their miserable dupes. Indeed the natural indignation of honest men may drive back the lesser sort for a time to their dens, but the leaders meanwhile are worming themselves into the upper circles of society; they sit in the legislative halls, and even in the councils of kings; they are, forsooth, the advocates of peace, of prudent retrenchment, zealous for the national honor, and even—God save the mark!—the peace-makers of society and the guardians of the Church's honor. The events of the last few years, which have culminated in the taking of Rome and in the captivity of the Holy Father, have confirmed by the unanswerable logic of facts the truth of what we have just said; for the deeds of impious violence, perpetrated with the sanction of law, are far more tyrannous than those committed amid the unbridled license of popular frenzy.

Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, had to do with just such men as these, centuries ago. Indeed, the writings of the holy bishop against these enemies of the Church would be made most natural and appropriate for our own times, by the mere substitution of those names too often seen of late in official journals, attached to oppressive decrees against seminaries, priests and bishops, or to the barbarous warrants in virtue of which the sacred abodes of harmless and helpless ladies have been violated, because they are consecrated to the Lord. Constantius seems to live again in those lying guarantees with which the venerated Head of the

Church is mocked in his prison on the Vatican. There is the same parade of loyal professions, the same perfidy, the same truthlessness.

Tigranes, after his return from his visit to Hilary, retired to rest, and might have slept soundly after his journey, but in his dreams he was carried forward to the presence of his imperial patron and friend, who seemed to receive him joyfully and to load him with favors. Martin, on the other hand, retired to his room with the little treatise of his holy bishop, and spent the whole night in eager perusal of its pages, as if it had been the word of some angel come down from heaven. His own enjoyment of that rich spiritual feast made him most eager to share it with his young friend, for whom he foresaw that many dangers were in store; and he was not without fear that, once caught in the giddy whirl of Court life, Tigranes might easily forget even his possession of Hilary's gift. With these charitable feelings in his heart, Martin met Tigranes early in the morning. "What a precious treasure," cried he, "you are taking to Paris in this little volume! It is as great in heavenly wisdom as it is small in bulk."

"Did you read it last night instead of sleeping?" asked Tigranes.

"Yes, every word," replied Martin, "all in a breath, without stopping for a second, except to praise God for having given to the world in these wicked times so excellent a teacher of His holy doctrines. These are not the mere lucubrations

of a well-read Christian scholar; they are the outpourings of a strong faith from the heart of a martyr who defies the executioner; they are as the roaring of the lion of Juda standing guard on the battlements of Sion. From this little book flashes forth the lightning that strikes down threatening monsters; it beams with a strong, clear light to guide the faithful soul to the haven of eternal truth, to light his way amid the shoals and quick-sands of sectarian fallacies."

"You are drawing a grand picture. Let me see the book."

"Do but listen to the opening lines," said Martin, unrolling the parchment, and as he read his voice trembled and his eyes flashed with the enthusiasm that filled his soul. 'It is now time to speak, for the moment is past when we may hold our peace. Let us listen to the voice of Christ, for the reign of anti-christ is begun. Let the true shepherds lift up their voice, for the hirelings have fled. Let us lay down our lives for the lambs of the flock, for thieves have broken in and the roaring lion is prowling about the fold. Let us go forth with this cry to martyrdom, for the angel of Satan has changed himself into an angel of light. Let us go in by the door, for no one cometh to the Father but through the Son. Let us unmask the false prophets as they glory in their boasted security, so that amid heresies and schisms the true faithful may be known. Let us manfully bear these tribulations, of which the like has not been

known from the beginning of the world, trusting always that these days will be shortened for the sake of the elect. Now is fulfilled the prophecy which says: "For there shall be a time when they will not bear sound doctrine, but according to their own desires they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and will turn away indeed their hearing from the truth, and will be turned to fables." But yet we must await with undoubting confidence the fulfilment of His promises who said: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil things against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, because your reward is very great in Heaven; for so they persecuted the prophets that were before you. You shall be brought before governors and before kings for my sake; but he that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved. And fear not those that kill the body, and cannot kill the soul; but rather fear Him that can destroy both soul and body in hell." Let us not be solicitous about ourselves, for the very hairs of our head are numbered. But, guided by the light of the Holy Spirit, let us follow the truth, that the spirit of error may not seduce us with lies; let us adhere to Christ in death, that we may be united with Him in the glory of His kingdom. We may not hold our peace any longer, for to be silent now would betray our faint-heartedness, not show forth our modesty.'"

"Why, he is breaking down dykes that will let

in a torrent upon us!" exclaimed Tigranes, with some alarm.

"Very well, he *will* open them if need be," replied Martin. "For years and years he has sighed, and prayed, and remonstrated, and borne with the Emperor who has now sold himself, soul and body, to the schismatics, all the while proclaiming that he asks only for peace; who styles the bishops his fathers, and meanwhile sends new formulas of faith to Pope Liberius, as if the Bishops of Rome were under his tuition; who accuses us of being untractable, whilst he is plotting underhand the complete overthrow of religion. And will you tell me that it is not time for the shepherds of Christ's flock to raise their voices at last and to put the faithful on their guard? We are called to be citizens of Heaven, and Jesus Christ is the King of kings. But hear the noble words of Hilary: 'Oh, that it had seemed good to Thee, Almighty God, Creator of all things, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that the time of my life and of my witness to Thy Holy Name and the finishing of my ministry had been placed in the days of a Nero or a Decius! Then, by Thy divine mercy, I should not have feared the storm. For one may fight with confidence in open battle against him who denies Christ, against tortures and execution. Then Thy people would follow us, its leaders, to the glory of a public confession of Thy Name, fearless of persecution. But now we must struggle against a crafty persecutor, against a

deceitful enemy, against Constantius, who is playing the part of anti-christ, who does not lay the scourge upon our back, but lavishes his adulation to our face, who does not chain us in a dungeon, leaving our spirit free, but binds us in his palace with the gilded fetters of offices and honors; he does not strike off the head with a sword, but kills the soul; he boasts himself a Christian, and yet denies Christ; he professes to reverence the bishops, that they may no longer be bishops.'"

"But, Martin," cried Tigranes, "that sounds more like the style of a tribune than of a bishop—be it said with all respect."

"But, Tigranes," replied Martin, "you should know that Constantius alone has done more harm to the Church by his wiles than many tyrants together could ever do by the sword. And now he is only seeking a good opportunity to destroy religion altogether, simply to please the schismatics. Are you not aware that very many have been deceived already by his hypocritical profession of protecting the Christian faith, by the Judas kisses he is lavishing on the Bishop of Rome, by his eternal protestations that he is anxious to secure freedom of conscience to all?"*

* Lest any one should imagine that in this sketch of the times of which we write, we have unduly heightened the coloring of the picture, we may say that we do but quote literally from the work of St. Hilary, mentioned at the opening of this chapter. Such was indeed the character, such were the deeds of Constantius, as may be gathered from contemporaneous monuments. That these very charges were made against Constantius to his

"At any rate," rejoined Tigranes, "I cannot see that this book will be of any use to me at the court of our new Augustus in Paris. As for Constantius, I leave him to answer for himself; but Julian! Julian is quite another man. I answer for it that he will show us the bright side of the picture."

"God grant it! But still let me entreat you to keep this book, and carefully too; and should it ever happen—for who can foretell the chances of the future—that we find our hopes deceived, then take care to change the name in it, as Hilary recommended. Depend upon it, the saints do not say such things at random. Change it especially here," and Martin went on to read again: "'I say

face, by the legates of the Roman Church, we know from the writings of Lucifer of Cagliari, who was one of them: "Cum sis Christianus . . . . . dixisti: Pacem volo firmari in meo imperio, cupiens violare in nobis pacem dominicam, scindere populum Dei." Lucif., *De non conven., cum haer.*, Opp. p. 775.—Constantius threw the blame of the schism on the obstinacy of the clergy: "Dixisti 'nos fuisse atque esse inimicos pacis, hostes unitatis." *Ibid.* p 768.—Constantius proved false to the solemn promises he had sworn to the bishops: "Litteris tuis jurasti Alexandrinis nihil te mali deinceps facturum Athanasio, et nunc quaeris eum interficere." Id. *Pro S. Athanas.*, lib. II., Opp. p. 856.—The works of Lucifer, who is styled *Saint* by some, those of St. Hilary, of St. Athanasius, and even of contemporaneous Pagan writers would, at need, furnish additional proof of what we say in this chapter. Are not the revolutionists of our own day carrying out the very same policy towards the Pope and the clergy? And if tyrants now repeat the acts of the tyrants of earlier days, what wonder that the bishops now repeat the very words of those who suffered before?

to you, Constantius, what I should have said to Nero, what I should have repeated to Decius and to Maximian: You are making war upon God, you are torturing the Church, you are persecuting Saints, you hate the followers of the Gospel, you would destroy religion, you are laying tyrannous hands upon divine, not human, things. Such are the deeds for which you must answer in common with them; now let me tell you your own. You falsely claim to be a Christian, and you are a new enemy of Christ, the forerunner of anti-christ, and the priest of his mysteries.' . . . ."

These words produced a visible impression upon Tigranes, for he knew full well that Julian was an apostate from the faith of his baptism and a worshipper of idols; he made an effort to hide his annoyance, and Martin, without seeming to perceive it, went on reading. But when, a few lines further on, he came to a passage in which the hypocritical reverence shown by Constantius towards the bishops was clearly unmasked, and his lying professions, his perfidious persecution and still more perfidious flattery of the Bishop of Rome, shown in their true colors, Tigranes, unable to contain himself longer, interrupted his friend:

"No, no! never, never! My noble Julian will never descend to such dastardly baseness. Whether he is a good Christian or not, I do not pretend to know or to decide, but lying, deceit, underhand treachery, are things unknown to the great

and lofty soul of Augustus. Upon my honor, were it not for the veneration in which I hold the Bishop of Poitiers, I should soon make a pile of ashes of that book. I know that the day will never come when I shall need to read those pages, much less to change the name of the base Emperor of the East for that of the frank and generous Augustus of Gaul. Long live Julian!"

And with these words he took his leave of Martin, with constrained courtesy, for in spite of all his efforts, his countenance too plainly betrayed the vexation of his soul. Such is the power of a passion!

XVII.

PREPARATIONS FOR WAR.

TIGRANES left Poitiers, as we have seen, vexed and uneasy at the words of the holy bishop Hilary, and no better satisfied with his friend Martin. Though neither of them had directly foretold the disastrous future of the new Emperor, their very reticence and mere apprehensions were quite enough to chafe Tigranes, who could see in Julian only a model of uprightness and the saviour of the Roman Empire; and though he could not see clearly in what his patron had ever shown

himself a friend of the Church, yet he felt sure that he was not its enemy, and that during his reign the Christians would at all events have nothing to fear. It was not long before the sanguine youth saw his bright hopes cruelly deceived.

Julian hardly waited till Constantius was fairly on his way to the East before he set about securing the Empire for himself, with all the cunning and duplicity, the false promises and seductive wiles so well known to revolutionists of every age; though in Julian's operations a masterly use of hypocrisy was the prominent feature. His leading idea was to restore the sway of paganism and demon-worship with all their attendant abominations; he accordingly gathered into his council the chief ministers of these hideous rites. Besides Oribasius, who had never left his side, he brought from the East, Eleusinus, the High-Priest of Ceres, by whom he had been initiated at Athens into the dark mysteries of that goddess, and the well-known Jamblicus, the greatest of the Neoplatonic philosophers of that day. To Jamblicus, Julian had written in terms of the most exaggerated affection and esteem, repeatedly styling him his "great master," the "greatest of living philosophers," a "second Plato," and he even publicly bestowed upon him the title of the "Divine Jamblicus." Certainly the Alexandrian Schools could not produce his equal in the philosophy of hell, or in the consummate art with which he explained it in terms apparently most orthodox, and the world

will probably never see a more crafty enemy of Christ and Christianity. It was natural, then, that Julian should call upon him as the very man for his purpose. A devoted and active promoter of paganism and demon-worship in its worst forms could not help hating with satanic malignity everything that related to Christianity and its Divine Founder. It is not surprising then, that, as we have already said, the leading project of the new Cæsar was the total destruction of the true faith, which stood forth, with the pure light of its heaven-born truth and the stern morality of its divine precepts, a silent but eloquent protest and a firm barrier against the degrading orgies of paganism, which he had determined to restore to their olden prominence. He was too sagacious not to perceive that such a change in the actual religious state of the Empire could not be brought about at once or by open measures, but that the game would be more surely won by the dissembling and hypocritical policy of Jamblicus, a line of conduct which he had already adopted in his dealings with his brother, Gallus Cæsar, and his uncle, Constantius. Indeed the Emperor, Arian as he was, would never have raised Julian to a share in the imperial purple, had he suspected him of any attachment to idolatry and magic. Moreover, the danger of forfeiting any of his present chances of supplanting Constantius on the imperial throne, by the loss of many adherents both in Gaul and throughout the Roman Empire gener-

ally, where the Christian religion was supreme, made it a necessity for him to profess with greater ostentation than ever, a strong attachment to the true faith, which he loathed and hated in his heart. But to resume the thread of our narrative.

The imperial palace at Paris stood in the midst of a beautiful plain on the left bank of the Seine, just where the slope of a little hill melts into the level mead, a spot consecrated in later days by the shrine of that glorious virgin, St. Genevieve, which crowns its summit. The sacred edifice was desecrated during the dismal days of terror—when France became a prey to the great infidel revolution which closed the last century—by its dedication to the *Great Men* of the country, many of whom bore unhappily a striking likeness to the demi-gods whose place is in hell; and the visitor who surveyed that incongruous collection of "*Great Men*" might well turn away in horror and disgust at finding St. Vincent de Paul side by side with those whom Julian would have hailed with joy as congenial friends and worthy successors to his throne and policy. To the honor of the late Emperor be it said, the desolated temple has been given back to Religion, and a great national scandal is thus wiped out.

The imperial residence was, in the time of Constantius Chlorus, father of Constantine the Great, surrounded by a few private dwellings standing in the midst of spacious gardens; around this nucleus, at the time of which we write, had already

sprung up quite a respectable city, to which Julian gave the preference over all the cities of Gaul, by choosing it as his place of residence while in the province. Baths, forums, temples, circuses, theatres, in a word, all the refinements of luxury which Roman civilization was wont to confer upon conquered nations as a substitute for their lost independence, had been largely granted to the Parisii, the former masters of this territory. But they had received a purer civilization through Denis the Areopagite. The great apostle of Gaul had opened the eyes of that nation to the light of the true faith, that light by which the darkness of ignorance is dispelled, by which men are humanized and softened. The Christian basilica, at that time, was not a part of the Roman city, but stood on an island opposite, the very spot now adorned by the great Metropolitan Church of Notre Dame, the cradle of the ancient Lutetia Parisiorum. And though that temple of the earlier Christians lacked something of the grand proportions and rich adornments of its more splendid successor, yet it was by no means contemptible in size or beauty; and it had its own glory too, for it rose triumphant upon the ruins of the old Roman and Druidic superstitions. Moreover, at the very time of Julian's exaltation, it was the scene of a council famous in the annals of the Church, for it gave the death-blow to Arianism in the West. The prelates, guided by the Holy Ghost and strengthened by the letters of the great Hilary, who was

present everywhere in Gaul by his boundless zeal, had drawn up and signed the synodal letter which was to be sent to the other churches, in which they bore their witness to the divinity of the Son of God and blasted the Arian impiety. Then, rejoicing in the happy issue of their labors, they stood up before the assembled faithful to announce the result of their deliberations. Victorinus, Bishop of Paris, ascended the ambo, and with the usual solemn formalities proceeded to recite the decrees and the profession of faith drawn up by the bishops. The assembly heard him with visible emotion, and, at the close, unable to repress their pious enthusiasm, broke out into loud acclamations: "We profess the same belief! The faith of Nicæa! The truth of Jesus Christ! The Gospel, the Gospel! Long live the orthodox bishops! Anathema to the blasphemers of the Word! Anathema to the heretic Arius!" This was the very day on which Tigranes reached Paris, and as it was a Sunday, his first thought was to go to the Church. What was his surprise, on entering, to find Julian there, surrounded by all the pomp and glitter of imperial state, and accompanied by the usual imperial suite! The prospective Emperor stood at the head of the central nave, apparently absorbed in devout attention. To the episcopal salutation he made answer with the faithful: "And with thy spirit;" he crossed himself before and after the reading, and seemed to take part in the general assent expressed by all at the close.

The desired effect was produced; the faithful looked meaningly at one another, exchanged significant expressions of joyful anticipation that the pious Augustus of Gaul would soon repair the wrongs done to religion by the impiety of Constantius. Tigranes was too frank and straightforward himself to suspect another, and above all his idol Julian, of anything like open hypocrisy, and his first impulse, accordingly, was to condemn in his heart the good old Bishop of Poitiers, who seemed to him now to have been blinded by indiscreet zeal, for how else could he ever have harbored even a suspicion as to the sincerity of the new Emperor?

"If he insists so much," thought Tigranes, "upon my reading this book against that anti-christ, Constantius, and considers it a necessary guide at the Court of Julian, certainly he must greatly mistrust Julian. Now here is Julian giving him the lie by his own public acts. There is no mistaking such marks of Christian piety; Cæsar is proving now that on the throne he still remembers his early Christian training, and means to be true to the teachings and practices of his youth. What I see before me now, is proof enough that he has got the better of the temptations and vanities of his later life. Indeed it could not be otherwise with such a noble and heroic soul! It is human to err, it is the mark of wisdom to reform." Thus Tigranes argued within himself the case of his much loved patron; now his soul was filled with joy and satis-

faction at the thought that he had doubly regained his august friend, and the hours seemed years to him until he should be able to converse with Julian on the events which had occurred during their separation.

On leaving the Church, Tigranes fell in with Oribasius and Eleusinus. From the conversation of these two pagans he might have discovered that the seeming piety of Julian was all hypocrisy; indeed within twenty-four hours after he had partaken of the consecrated chalice brought to him by the deacon during the sacred mysteries, Julian went down, under cover of the night, into a dark and unhallowed cave to offer sacrifice to the demon gods of the heathens.* And even though Tigranes had failed to gather from these friends of the new Cæsar the proofs of the latter's want of sincerity, the words which he soon after heard from the lips of Julian himself should have left no doubt in his mind; but his usual keenness was doubtless somewhat dulled by the lavish show of affection with which he was publicly received, added to the promise of the prospective governorship of Mespotamia and the immediate appointment to the office of private secretary. And so Tigranes still continued blind and devoted.

Among the tribunes of the imperial guard in Paris, was the noble Valentinian, whom the injustice of Constantius had deprived of the official rank

* Ammian. Marcellin, xx. xxi.

he held under that despotic Emperor. This was fortunate for Tigranes, who had always been bound to Valentinian by ties of strong friendship, as we have already had occasion to mention. This brave officer had been reinstated in his office by Julian some time before the assumption of the latter to a share in the imperial purple. The two friends renewed in Paris their old familiar intercourse, and Valentinian could not help observing that Tigranes, in the whirl of excitement and the hurry of business inseparable from his new office, seemed to have utterly lost his once eager desire of baptism. Taking advantage of an old friend's privilege, he one day ventured to remind him of his forgotten purpose.

"My dear friend," said the Christian officer, "it is well to serve Augustus, but it is not well to serve him only. I know that an Emperor far mightier than he had already offered you a position in His court; have you determined not to accept it?"

Tigranes understood very well that his friend alluded to his deferred admission into the Church, and unwilling to seem utterly careless about so important a matter, he replied apologetically:

"One thing at a time. What can I do in the midst of such hurry and business? Indeed, I hardly feel that I am master of my own thoughts. Let me first see this sovereign well established on his throne, and then I shall bind myself to the service of the other. Really I cannot think of it until

the contest is over and the era of universal peace begun."

Valentinian shook his head meaningly, accompanying the act with an expression of countenance which betokened anything but confidence in the prospect held out by his friend.

"What!" said Tigranes, evidently astonished. "Do you not trust him? Do you not believe that God has sent him to bring back order to the world."

Valentinian was a soldier, as frank as he was fearless, nor was he wanting in that keen and high-toned sense of honor which becomes a Christian soldier. And, unused to flattery or dissimulation, he spoke his thoughts plainly: "I will tell you what I think. I do believe that God sends him in His wrath which has been enkindled by our sins. As for Constantius, I am persuaded that God is weary of him. He has done all that a man can do to provoke the Almighty to tear from his shoulders the blood-stained purple he is dragging through Asia. I can conceive of no wickedness or impious folly which he has not tolerated and even encouraged. In his court there is not an honest man left, or one who dares to tell him the truth; he is followed by a herd of base parasites who know of no duty higher than to applaud the senseless whims of their master. He must now be hailed as 'Divine Majesty,' 'Eternal One,' or by any other blasphemous title, even whilst he imbrues his hands in guiltless blood and sacrilegiously tampers with holy things. And

even supposing that this were his misfortune rather than his fault, that it were folly rather than crime, how shall he be held guiltless of the malignant, the perfidious, the relentless warfare he is waging against the Vicar of Jesus Christ? There is no room here for the pretext of ignorance; it is open impiety. My dear Tigranes, I believe that this is what will give the victory to Julian; but should Julian imitate Constantius, the same cause will give the victory to a rival whom God will raise up against Julian."

But Tigranes was not yet prepared to surrender. It was only somewhat later, in Constantinople, that his eyes were opened at last to a knowledge of the satanic impiety which filled the heart of his adored patron.

The day on which the above conversation took place was precisely that on which the answer of Constantius was expected to the announcement sent by Julian of his unsought promotion by the voice of the people and of his desire that peace should reign between the two Emperors. In fact the Quæstor Leona reached Paris that very day with the brilliant suite and the numerous escort which had accompanied him from Asia. He brought back the reply of Constantius, which Julian would receive only in the presence of the people and the army. The ambassador was a consummate politician, thoroughly trained in all the intrigues of courts, and well known, moreover, as the imperial agent in the many shameless attempts which

had been made to browbeat and coerce the bishops in the councils of the Church. He took in, at a glance, the difficulties of his own position and the game of Julian. But there was no remedy; so, making a virtue of necessity, he affected the utmost confidence and unconcern. The assembly was numerous, for the agents of the new Cæsar had been busy among the citizens for some time, in preparation for the event. At the appointed hour Julian made his appearance with all the honors and emblems of the imperial dignity, surrounded by a brilliant staff of officers and ministers of state. When the enthusiastic acclamations of the multitude had ceased he ordered Leona to read the Emperor's letter. The Quæstor obeyed, but when he uttered the words of Constantius, commanding his nephew to give up the purple and to lay aside the title of Augustus, the whole multitude broke out into cries of frantic indignation; from all sides rose the cries: "Long live the Emperor Julian!—Augustus, stand firm at your post!—Be true to the wishes of the provinces and of the army!—The Republic needs you!—Long live Julian Augustus!"

As might have been foreseen, Tigranes was among the foremost of the imperial suite to cry out against the haughty command of the Eastern Emperor that Julian should resign his rank and his pretensions. Pointing to Julian, he appealed indignantly to the people, who reëchoed his words with furious vehemence. "This is he," cried Tigranes, "who has been chosen by the people, the

noble Augustus, who takes no step without their approval! The Eastern tyrant seeks to uncrown our Sovereign!—Shame! Eternal shame on him who would destroy the happiness of the Republic!"

When silence had been in some measure restored, Julian turned to Leona and said: "Go to your master and tell him what you have seen and heard." Leona esteemed himself fortunate in escaping with a sound body from the furious multitude, which certainly would not have sent him away unhurt had he been left at their mercy. To make matters worse for Constantius, the officers who had come with Leona were relating to all with whom they conversed how the Emperor at Constantinople had received the intelligence of Julian's exaltation with furious rage and terrible threats, fiercely driving from his presence those who had brought the tidings. Indeed, they asserted, were it not for the Persian war in which he was then busily engaged, the only answer of Constantius would have been to send an army, with strict orders to the general to bring back the head of his rebellious nephew. These discourses were not slow in finding their way to the Court of Julian, and it is not difficult to conjecture the effect they would produce upon such a man. The military preparations already on foot were pushed on with redoubled vigor, and by way of keeping his troops in practice, the young Cæsar managed to engage them in occasional skirmishes with the Germans on the borders of his provinces. The only obsta-

cle to his purpose of throwing off the mask at once and declaring himself openly his uncle's enemy, was the fact that his wife Helena was the sister of Constantius. But this difficulty was soon removed by the death of Helena, so opportune for the plans of Julian, and followed by so little apparent grief on his part, that whispered rumors went abroad of poison or some other foul play. Of course Tigranes could not share the common suspicion so injurious to the honor of his hero, and he strove to counteract it by louder eulogies of the loyalty, the temperance, the justice, the courage and the vigorous energy of the prince; he said nothing, though, about his piety, for he could not reconcile in his own mind that ostentatious devotion displayed in the Christian churches with the tone of indifference, and even of scorn and contempt, at times, with which Julian spoke in private of the religion he affected to honor; and Tigranes was naturally too upright and truthful to say what he did not believe. He had yet to learn the worst traits of Julian's perfidious character.

The enthusiasm of Gaul found an echo in Italy, and Julian deemed it most advisable to break at once the existing peace before the popular favor should have time to cool or Constantius be able to withdraw his troops from the Persian campaign; but first he must have some sign from the gods. Learning from his heathen friends that there was near Vienne a shrine sacred to Mithras, hidden from the common gaze but well-known to the

votaries of that divinity, Julian determined to visit the temple, and seek a response from the god, to whom he had the greatest devotion. The time seemed to him, too, most favorable for completing there his initiation in the mysteries of Mithras, it being the period at which was celebrated the anniversary feast of the Sun.

The oracle, as was usual in such cases, gave him the answers he wished to have, and encouraged him according to his desire to be encouraged. He no longer hesitated, but marching at once, crossed the Alps, then the plains of Illyria, and finally reached Constantinople without opposition. Valentinian, who accompanied the expedition, one day expressing to Tigranes his astonishment at this wonderful march to the capital of the Empire without a single obstacle, concluded, by way of accounting for it:

"I will tell you, in confidence, what I think about it all; I verily believe that he is helped by the devil. How else can we account for the fact that all his undertakings succeed; that he laughs at every danger and the danger disappears? When Constantius was at Antioch and we here in Gaul, Constantius could have sent us all out of existence with a single word; then suddenly, just in time for the purposes of our commander, Sapor attacks him in the rear and obliges him to turn round and leave us in peace. The Prefects of Italy and Illyria were able to fight hand to hand with us and dispute every inch of ground; they even held the

passes of the Rhetian Alps and the crossings of the Ister; when lo! on a sudden they are beating a hasty retreat, as if we had the army of Xerxes. Italy is ours from the Alps to Lylibæum, not won by the sword, but by written books, by popular clamors, by treachery—I blush to say it—by the treason of soldiers, of the very commanders and prefects. Julian is enjoying all the provisions and stores collected by Constantius. He has entered Illyria in triumph, Pannonia, Dalmatia and Dacia seemed to await his coming to hail him with the cry: 'Long live our Augustus Julian!'"

"These miracles," replied Tigranes, "are wrought by the glorious renown of Julian and the tyranny of Constantius."

"They are wrought, my good friend, by gold and by partisan influence," said Valentinian. "But be that as it may," he continued, "Constantius is not yet dead; he has still legions and generals, and money. If he succeeds in throwing off Sapor, we shall find ourselves fighting with odds of one to ten. Indeed, who knows whether he is not even now on the march against us? I heard it whispered in the prætorium that all this great levying of troops, of stores and arms, is not a remote preparation for war, but an immediate ordering for battle."

"Well, since you seem to know all, I may tell you that the last news is very much to that effect. It is reported that Sapor has retreated beyond the Tigris, and I believe that he expects to find him-

self engaged in a civil war as soon as he enters Mesopotamia. One thing is sure, the army of Constantius is returning by forced marches, and"—

"And Julian more unconcerned than ever, more confident, more sanguine than ever!"

"Fortune favors the bold!" cried Tigranes.

"Fortune — nonsense! He declares that the gods have promised him the victory; he takes care to have that report spread among the soldiers, and he asserts that the death of Constantius is not far off. There is something very mysterious about all this. And, if you want to know my mind, I will tell you, that if I were not bound already, I would not for the world take any rank under him now. No one can persuade me," he continued, lowering his voice, "that some one has not already been paid to give Constantius his quietus with a little— well, a little poison"—

"Oh! oh!" interrupted Tigranes, "banish such groundless suspicion. It is impossible!"

"Well then, let it be a suspicion."

"Most certainly, a mere suspicion, and nothing better. That his promises from the sacred divinities are mere trash, madness, anything you wish, I grant. But poison! No, never! never!"

"Well, we shall see. But believe me, when a man has once been a Christian, baptized and even anointed with the holy chrism, and then goes back to paganism, we have everything to fear from him. Would that I had known it before entering his service."

"Courage! courage!" cried Tigranes. "At least Julian will not persecute; he will give peace to all, even to the Church. Besides, I learned from the priests in Rome—and I am a catechumen, you know—that it is not our duty to pronounce judgment on princes; he is recognized by Gaul, and by all the West. This is the Roman law. Provided he does not insist upon our doing anything sinful, let him settle his own conscience with God, if he is unfaithful to his duties. And besides, we do not know but that he may some day return to himself."

Vain hope!

XVIII.

FROM BAD TO WORSE.

HOWEVER well or ill-grounded Valentinian's suspicions may have been, they received a strong confirmation before Julian had even reached the gates of Constantinople.

Amid the busy preparations for the anticipated campaign, and while all were anxiously looking forward to its doubtful issue, two lords from the court of Constantinople alighted one morning before Julian's quarters in Dacia. Those who watched them, read in their countenances the news

they brought, the gladdest tidings that Julian could have received. Constantius had just died at Mopsucrene, a hamlet in Cilicia, and on his death-bed had named his nephew sole heir to the imperial crown; the whole of Asia, citizens and soldiers, all were devoted to the new Emperor. The two envoys had hardly delivered their message, when a numerous body of senators and nobles from Constantinople was announced. They had come with every demonstration of enthusiastic gratulation to swear homage to their new master. They were presented to Julian, and addressed him thus: "Julian Augustus, the Fathers and the people of New Rome await your coming as that of a beneficent divinity; let us beg that you will hasten to bless with your presence the imperial city, which glories in having given you birth, and will rejoice to welcome you with honors such as it never paid to any other."

This sudden and fortunate turn in the course of events might certainly have been too much for the self-control of an ordinary man, but the wary Julian was well enough prepared for it to effectually conceal the joyful emotion he could not fail to experience. He raised his hand for a moment to his eyes, as if to hide a tear, and murmured in a sorrowful tone, "Hapless Constantius! In the flower of his age!" Then raising his head with the look and voice of one who felt that he was master of the world, he said to the envoys of Constantinople: "Return as my messengers, and bear

with you my orders. Let all the honors due to imperial majesty be paid to the remains of the late Emperor, and let them be at once entombed in our monument at Constantinople. Tell his widow that I shall not remember that her husband died in arms against me; she may rely upon my protection. Announce to my fellow-citizens my desire and purpose to satisfy, with as little delay as possible, their loyal wishes—for the present I need a few days to indulge my private grief at this domestic affliction, for the sainted Constantius was my near relative, my uncle, my benefactor." Then with a deep sigh he took leave of the deputation from the capital. He did indeed need a few days of privacy to give vent to the overwhelming joy which filled his heart, now that he felt himself in full possession of the imperial power. He beheld under his sceptre the provinces of Asia, of Africa and of Egypt; a hundred legions stood ready to obey the least sign of his will; the whole world was at his feet. A storm of violent emotions, a whirl of fantastic dreams, of wild hopes and shapeless projects held riot in his soul. No wonder that he was for the moment incapable of action or deliberation, that he was overcome by the intoxication, the delirium of an overmastering ambition suddenly and fully satisfied.

When these first transports of joy had somewhat subsided, Julian began to consider the grave and urgent matters of state which had fallen into his hands. The first thing to be done was to make a

solemn entry into Constantinople, and by promptly taking official possession of his throne and capital, to anticipate any attempt upon the imperial sceptre, should some ambitious aspirant be emboldened by too long an interregnum to hazard one. He was received with enthusiasm and with true Eastern splendor by the enslaved people of that vast and luxurious capital; the fickle populace is ever ready to hail a new master. The soldiers were thinking of the usual largesses; the courtiers dreamed of promotions and new dignities; the tradesmen were calculating the probable increase in trade during the consequent festivities; the idlers and sight-seers were already enjoying in anticipation the games of the circus, while the citizens of the better class hoped that the new ruler would show himself less arbitrary and oppressive than his predecessor.

The new Emperor was met, some miles from the city, by the senate, the chief officers of the Republic, and the municipal authorities, with their respective officers and attendants. The procession was stopped at intervals by the deputations from the neighboring cities, and the Emperor submitted with what grace he might to the repetition of their studied harangues. When the imperial cortege reached the city the gates were choked with the crowds that poured out to greet the youthful sovereign, who was rather borne on than accompanied by them through the streets gayly decorated and spanned by a hundred triumphal arches.

Since the day of its foundation by Constantine, the Eastern Capital had not witnessed such a splendid pageant. The people were, for the most part, sincere; for they had been harassed by the exacting and perfidious tyranny of Constantius, and now they suddenly found themselves, as they thought, restored to peace and safety, with every hope of a long enjoyment of their new-found blessings. The hated tyrant had disappeared as by a sudden turn of good fortune, and his throne was now to be held by a promising youth, their fellow-citizen, renowned for his incorruptible sense of justice and military prowess. He came to them with fair promises on his lips, and his words were those of a friend of the people rather than of a ruler, while the orators and philosophers, the party-leaders and the haranguers, with a great expenditure of rhetoric, sounded the praises of his past achievements, and foretold those which were yet to come. Even the Christians, who constituted the bulk of the population, though sighing over the well-known apostasy of Julian, were fascinated and carried away by the prevailing love of novelty, and persuaded themselves that they would probably find themselves better off under the equitable rule of a heathen emperor than under a Christian sovereign who favored the persecuting spirit of heresy. They remembered how many of their churches had been ruined or turned to sacrilegious uses, how the religious communities had been persecuted and their bishops exiled. They had wept with their

Italian brethren over the widowhood of the Roman Church when the Supreme Pontiff had been insulted, robbed and banished from his See; when the bishops of Naples, of Vercelli, and of Milan had been cruelly persecuted by Constantius, who styled himself the Protector of the Church! But especially they remembered that Constantius had signed the decree against the faith of Nicæa, a short time before his death, and there were not wanting those who proclaimed their conviction that by this very act the unhappy monarch had signed the decree of his own early doom.

The ardent enthusiasm of the people and senate of Constantinople was very much of the nature of a feverish paroxysm. For there are feverish quickenings at times in the movements of great multitudes, as wild and uncontrollable as the throbbings of a diseased pulse. There were, however, some more sober temperaments, some men of cooler and sounder judgment, whose better knowledge of the new ruler enabled them to form a just estimate of passing events; these men did not look for better things from Julian, and their apprehensions were fully justified by the fanatical zeal for paganism which was daily becoming more evident in his outward conduct. But amid the popular frenzy which reigned for some time after the accession of Julian, it would have been worse than madness to utter any suspicions against the idol of the people; these views were consequently not made known outside of a small circle. But

one, a venerable patrician and a fervent Christian, was bold enough on one occasion to assure a circle of intimate friends that he did not share their hopes of Julian, and that they would, before long, be cruelly undeceived. "For what faith," he asked, "can you place in an apostate?" "And what faith," they rejoined, "could we place in a heretic?"

"Believe me," said the old man, "the new apostate is worse than the former heretic." Then raising his eyes towards heaven, he continued:

"Constantius was indeed a cruel persecutor of the Church; but in many cases he was rather deceived than wilfully wicked. Well! God has judged him, and if the baptism received upon his death-bed found him truly contrite for his sins, we may certainly hope that he has obtained mercy. But this new Cæsar, a renegade to the faith of his baptism! No, no, he cannot but do worse than his uncle!"

"How, a renegade?" cried several.

"Yes, and by means of a truly hellish rite. I mean that our new Cæsar thinks that he has wiped out from his soul the mark of his baptism by that pagan ceremony called the Taurobolium."

"What kind of a rite or ceremony is that?" asked a pious lady, with a vague feeling of terror and abhorrence.

"It is an execrable rite, like every other act of pagan worship," answered the old patrician with indignant warmth, "a sacrilegious rite inspired by

the devil out of hatred for the Incarnate Word, out of hatred for the Lord, whom Julian and his friends contemptuously style the Galilean, just as they call us Galileans because we are faithful to Him. I know on very good authority, that this new Cæsar, by way of preparing to ascend the throne, went to a place not far from the spot where we now are, and there, surrounded by the most notorious priests of the Grecian rites, both in idolatry and the black art, he was washed in the blood of a bull sacrificed for their heathen worship, then seizing one horn of the severed head of the victim, he swore that he, Flavius Claudius Julian Augustus, there consecrated the strength of the bull, duly sacrificed, according to the directions of the mother of the gods, which is one of their accursed heathen rites."

"If what you say be true," remarked one of the company, "we are certainly going from bad to worse."

"The whole world will become pagan," added another, "and what will then become of our fair capital—a city born with Christianity and growing with its growth? Constantinople has always been eminently a Christian city; it was never contaminated by the presence of these heathen abominations. Our New Rome was never decorated with temples and statues of the heathen gods, or of the nymphs, or other minor deities, nor defiled by their unholy games. In their stead we have in the great square the statues of Constantine and Helena,

and between them rises the cross in triumphal grandeur, with the inscription which you have all read: 'JESUS CHRIST. HE ALONE IS HOLY. HE ALONE IS THE LORD IN THE GLORY OF THE FATHER.' We cannot walk through our streets without meeting at every step the saving cross as it glitters on every spire and monument, or some work of Christian art—a good Shepherd, or Daniel in the Lions' Den, or the Divine Redeemer, or some Apostle or Prophet. Nay, the imperial palace even has no nobler adornments than such memorials and symbols of Christian faith! You have often remarked the splendid representation in relief, over the main entrance, of the great Constantine trampling under foot a huge dragon, emblematic of the monster of idolatry which he had crushed. No, our city is too thoroughly Christian ever to be paganized. Even if Julian were wicked enough to wish to inaugurate such a change, he is too politic not to see that it would be fatal to him to attempt it." "My friend," said the first speaker sorrowfully, "you say truly that our New Rome was born with Christianity and has grown up with it, and that there is no pagan monument within its walls. But it is not impossible that God may yet punish this city for the favor shown in it to Arius, that blasphemer of Christ's divinity, by allowing it to be defiled with the filthy abominations of idolatry. I pray God that I may prove a false prophet, but it seems clear to me that the exaltation of our new Cæsar is but the preparation of the scourge which shall avenge

the insults offered in this city to the divine Word Incarnate. We shall yet see torrents of Christian blood flowing around us; but the blood of these victims will appease the just wrath of God, and though I should not live to witness this event, for I am already on the brink of the grave, you who are younger will, I trust, see this new tyrant disappear in the triumph of the Divine Word?"

The old man was but too good a prophet. Julian was Emperor, and no one even dreamed of disputing his right to the purple, partly the prize of his own boldness, partly bequeathed by the policy of a dying relative. The new Cæsar thought that his hold upon the Roman sceptre would be strengthened by a show of forgiveness and respect towards his predecessor, and with this purpose in view he ordered preparations to be made on the most magnificent scale for the reception of the imperial remains which were then on their way from Asia. Already had the deceased Sovereign received multiplied tokens of his people's generous forgiveness; during the whole course of the funeral march to the capital, the people flocked together to pay their homage to the august dead; at every stage of the journey the bishops and clergy came together to perform anew the funeral rites and to celebrate the usual expiatory sacrifice; at night they watched with the faithful around the catafalque amid the light of a thousand perfumed tapers and the sound of solemn chants, and on the morrow accompanied the funeral procession on its

departure with fervent prayers and every mark of respectful sympathy.*

The funeral galley at length appeared in sight of Constantinople. To Jovian—the faithful friend of Tigranes—by virtue of his office of tribune in the imperial body-guard, had been assigned the honorable duty of escorting the Emperor's remains from Antioch to the Eastern Capital. The tribune ordered the coffin to be set on shore immediately, and it was borne through a silent and respectful throng of citizens, between the files of the prætorian guards to the royal palace. The bier was carried by several Asiatic prelates and surrounded by many of the clergy bearing lighted tapers; the imperial officers and the members of the court followed; the air was filled with the solemen chant of psalms and the fragrance of the perfumed tapers, and many, whether through passing emotion or sincere grief, honored the funeral pageant with their tears.

Julian had not counted upon such a display of sympathy for the late Emperor from those who but yesterday had hailed his own accession with frantic enthusiasm. He deemed it best, however, to hide his bitter disappointment, and came to meet the remains of his predecessor with his accustomed suite. Standing by the side of the bier, in the presence of all the people, he removed the crown from his head in token of mourning, and

* S. Greg. Nazianz *II. Or. cont. Julian.*

extended his right hand over the illustrious dead, to signify that he forgave whatever real or fancied wrongs he might have suffered from him. Then taking his place as chief mourner, he followed the funeral procession with uncovered head.

The great hall of the imperial palace had been prepared for the reception of the body. Here it was deposited upon a catafalque, richly decked with plates of gold and purple hangings, surrounded by torch holders and candelabra of massive gold, which held great tapers perfumed with the most fragrant spices; and that none of the marks of homage which had been paid to Constantine should be wanting to Constantius, the Prefects, the men of consular rank, the Senators, the civil magistrates, the Chamberlains and other officers of the imperial household passed in order before the lifeless form of their late master, knelt at his feet and kissed the hem of the imperial mantle. From time to time the officers of the palace drew near to the body and stood for a moment, as if awaiting the master's orders. On the following day the last solemn rites were celebrated in the Basilica of the Apostles. Julian did not feel that he could enter the sacred precincts after the idolatrous practices in which he had so lately taken a leading part; he accordingly stood in the vestibule with some of his immediate officers until the body of his uncle had been deposited in the tomb of Constantine, near to the main entrance of the church. But he went back

with a bitter heart; the popular favor so unexpectedly awakened at the sight of the deceased Emperor, and still more the majestic grandeur and beauty of the worship from which he had, by his own act, cut himself off, harassed his guilty soul beyond expression. As he looked upon the solemn scene, he saw the thousand lights which blazed upon the altar and around the catafalque; their fragrance was wafted to him from the sanctuary; he heard the sweet, sad harmony of the sacred chant; and the procession passed before him with its long line of glittering tapers, the levites with their pure white surplices, the bishops and ministers of the altar richly robed for the expiatory sacrifice—and his whole soul was filled with bitter hate; he writhed like an energumen under the torture to which he was condemned by his own hypocrisy. He hurried away, as soon he could, to the palace, and there gave vent to his rage in scoffs and curses against that "vile brood of Galileans," swearing that he had never meant to grant such undeserved honors to Constantius, except in the name and in honor of the gods.

Now that he felt himself firmly seated upon the throne, the new Augustus began to take measures for carrying out his ideas of reform. He had adopted as a fundamental rule of action the principle that every act of his administration must be the very reverse of what had been done by his predecessor. Such a course he thought best calculated to win the favor of the masses, who seemed

to look upon novelty as the chief characteristic of advance and improvement. Accordingly he began to cry out against "old abuses"; he spread abroad the report that the taxes were soon to be reduced, the administration of justice purified, the laws improved—in a word, that the Augustan age was dawning anew upon the Roman Empire. The time which was not taken up by audiences he devoted to forming judiciary commissions to revise the laws, and examining in person the accounts of the officers of the preceding administration; at the same time he was equally busy about the changes to be made in his own household—new prefects were appointed for the prætorium and new ministers for the sacred rites, consuls were nominated for the comitia on the kalends of January, new statutes were drawn up, and the imperial secretataries were kept busy writing letters to the cities of the Empire and to the old friends of the Emperor. There were few men of any consideration in the Roman Empire who were not honored with one or more letters from Julian. He set about forming a court of learned men, by which he meant heretical or heathen philosophers. But his great ambition was to be considered a deep and assiduous scholar; and accordingly the calls made upon him by those who came on urgent business were often met by the officer on duty with the answer: "The Emperor cannot be seen now." "Why?" "He has shut himself up in his study and left strict orders that nothing should be al-

lowed to disturb him." And then came forth from his imperial pen dissertations on philosophy and rhetoric, orations, treatises on pagan ascetics, compositions in prose and verse—in a word, productions in every department of literature, which were all either recited by himself in the Senate, or sent to scholars of renown and to the magistrates of favored cities.

Meanwhile he was not forgetful of the leading purpose he had always cherished in regard to the religious reformation of the Empire; had he been forgetful, his memory was always refreshed on this point by the demons to whom he had given himself in his initiation in the mysteries of Eleusis and Mithras, and in the rite of the Taurobolium; hence he was always well up in the knowledge of all the feasts of the various divinities, as became a pious and learned pontiff; he knew the lucky and unlucky days, the *dies intercisi* or half-holidays, and the particular rites, ceremonies and victims by which each individual divinity chose to be honored—things which even his heathen courtiers had almost forgotten from long disuse. Julian was in fact a living calendar in the palace, as well as the panegyrist, by excellence, of the heathen gods. By way of consoling himself for the hateful presence of Christian emblems which met his eye, turn where he would, in every part of the palace, he consecrated his own private apartments with due ceremonial to the Sun, and as he purposed to lay the foundation of his ideal pagan capital in the

Christian capital of the Empire, he gave orders for the erection of a heathen shrine in the imperial gardens. There were fountains, grottoes and niches dedicated to the nymphs, and pleasure-gardens consecrated to the Huntress Diana; statues and sacrificial altars were placed at every turn. But Constantinople could furnish no priests for the sacrifices; at his call, Greece and Asia sent him a legion of them. They came by land and by sea, chariot-loads and boat-loads of priests, haruspices, sacrificial ministers, diviners; priestesses were even more abundant, for besides the flood which poured in from distant quarters, many had remained secretly about the city in the hope of these better days. Unfortunately, however, the new priests, when at work, did not always succeed very well in the ceremonial, which was of course most painful to the deep religious feeling of the Emperor. In such cases, unable to restrain his pious ardor, he would rush forward and undertake to remedy the evil in person. Often was the august worshipper seen carrying with his own imperial hands the fagots to the different altars, and the coal-pans for the fumigations, or stooping on all fours to blow up the sacred fire. His attendants were thrown into the utmost shame and confusion on seeing their imperial master, in his devout zeal, so far forgetting his dignity; but he persisted in maintaining his undignified position, in making bellows of his cheeks and puffing into the coals. In handling the knife he plumed himself upon excelling

the most skilful sacrificer, and in examining the entrails of the victims and drawing auguries from them, he was prepared to teach the most experienced of the professional haruspices. And so all the philosophers of his court shook their heads significantly, and swore that he was undoubtedly the greatest Emperor ever known in the Roman annals, and the most proper Pontiff that ever presided over the interests of religion.

Our poor Tigranes meanwhile was groaning under the weight of the multiplied duties which fell to his lot as a confidential friend of his gracious sovereign, and had it not been for the little *douceur* held out to him in the prospective presidency of Carrhae, he would doubtless have complained aloud or resigned, for in his heart he considered all these heathenish observances as stupid folly or something worse. One day, when his master had gone forth into the country with a numerous train of priests and priestesses—Julian had a fondness for uniting in the bonds of piety the two halves of the human race—to spend the day in some solemn rites which could not be confined within walls, Tigranes went to unbosom himself to his friend Jovian; Valentinian was unfortunately hindered from joining his friends, his office in the imperial body-guard requiring his presence with the Emperor. The two friends indulged themselves in a long and familiar conversation on the state of affairs, Jovian striving to persuade his friend that things were sure to go from bad to worse. "This

wonderful remodelling of the magistracy and this universal reform," said the tribune, "mean nothing more nor less than the substitution of heathens in the place of Christians, of base and subservient tools instead of incorruptible public servants; it will result in bringing to the surface the worst elements in the Republic and banishing or putting to death the purest Christians and the most faithful ministers." In the midst of their conversation Jovian suddenly paused and drew the attention of Tigranes to a distant sound, as of an approaching multitude. "The Emperor must be returning early from his sacrifices," he said as he rose and went to the window. "See!" he exclaimed, calling his friend to him, "see for yourself, and judge what these reforms mean." Julian was indeed returning from the solemn worship of the mother of the gods. These rites had become things of daily occurrence, but the ceremony of that day had been one of unusual pomp; no vulgar offering of huge bulls or bearded goats, butchered by the hands of a common priest, but of a number of rare birds obtained at a fabulous cost from the centre of Asia, and offered to the great goddess by the hands of the holy Pontiff, as Julian modestly styled himself, with the most solemn ceremonial known to the ritual of idolatry. He was now entering the city on foot. Instead of the imperial mantle he wore a simple linen tunic, the usual dress of the priests, and a wreath of flowers entwined his august brow. The imperial guard followed at a

respectful distance; in their midst walked the chief groom of the imperial stables, leading the Emperor's horse. Immediately surrounding the Emperor was a throng of priests, of assistant ministers, haruspices, soothsayers, magicians and philosophers, all habited in the garb of their respective orders. Behind these followed a host of priestesses, a true saturnalian escort; some of them were dressed as bacchantes, some as sibyls, others as nymphs, all scandalously indecent, making a very orgy of this religious procession.

The noise made by this disgraceful crew was such that people ran to see what was the matter, and all were struck dumb at the shocking scene.

"It was not an improvement," cried some, as soon as they could recover themselves a little, "to dismiss so many old servants from the palace in order to fill it with these incarnate demons!" "We have been saved from the hands of a heretic only to fall into those of an idolater," cried others, "a poor exchange!" The older citizens turned away sadly and said with a sigh: "It is the first time, since the days of Constantine, of blessed memory, that our eyes have seen such scandalous abominations." The little children, who saw only the fantastic features of the pageant, innocently called upon their parents to know who those persons were that were dancing through the streets half-clothed, and when a mother sought to quiet them by answering in a general way, that they were the members of the court, the wives of the ministers

of state and—"Hush!" interrupted the more wary husband, "be careful. We are fallen upon days when it is necessary to see and be silent!"

The prætorian guards, who brought up the rear of the procession, walked mechanically on, bereft of all their wonted military pride; they were evidently covered with confusion at the thought of acting as an escort to the rabble of wanton women thus making a public display of their shameless dissoluteness. Their arms seemed to weigh upon their hands; they were ashamed to look up from the ground, and hardly kept time to the music to which they marched. Their noble tribune, Valentinian, had not the heart to raise his eyes as he passed the window from which he knew that his two friends were looking down upon him—he appeared like a man who was going to the pillory.

"Indeed, this is more than I expected," said Tigranes sadly, as he closed the window and turned away from the revolting spectacle.

NOTE.—The details of this scene are taken from contemporaneous writers. Let it suffice to mention ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *orat. Sti. Babilæ cont. Julian et Gent.* opp. t. III. pp. 534, 535, and THEODORET, *Hist. Eccles.*, III., 3 opp. t. III., p. 1092.

XIX.

VAIN ATTEMPTS AT PERVERSION.

EVERY man who has ever rebelled against God and His divine Son, Jesus, has often felt keenly the reproach to his apostasy expressed by the Christian life of the faithful around him—a reproach more pointed even than one conveyed by words. Holiness of life, meekness of disposition, and contempt for the pleasures and vanities of the world, always seem to be meant as a direct and stinging rebuke to him who has denied the faith. Accordingly, it has always been a capital point with apostates to win over as many of the faithful as possible, especially such as happen to wield a greater influence on the side of the truth by their reputation for learning, by their high social standing, or by other personal qualities. We are not surprised, therefore, to learn that an apostate of the stamp of Julian used all the artifices at his command to seduce the most illustrious Christians of his time. Among those upon whom he tried the effects of his flattering attentions and deceitful promises, was Cæsarius,* the court physician, who had accompanied Jovian in

* Saint Cæsarius, the physician.

the imperial escort which brought the remains of Constantius to the Eastern Capital. Cæsarius, who was equally renowned for virtue and learning, was the son of the holy matron, Nonna. He was the brother of St. Gregory of Nazianzum, the friend of St. Basil, and had finished his studies in the famous schools of Alexandria. He had acquired no mean preëminence in philosophy, geometry and astronomy, but his favorite study, and that with which his name has ever been so honorably connected, was the science of medicine. The echo of his praises had been heard far beyond the bounds of Egypt, and the Conscript Fathers of Constantinople paid him the singular honor of sending him a diploma of citizenship, with the privilege of a seat in their Senate. But even this did not satisfy their sense of his deserts; they sent an embassy to Constantius, praying, as a glory and an honor to themselves, that he would number Cæsarius among the other ornaments of his Court. The request was granted immediately, and in a very short time Cæsarius had become the chief physician and the favorite officer of the Emperor.

It seemed as if God had delighted to pour out His gifts with lavish abundance upon this child of saints. Tall, graceful, and dignified in person, with a steady, piercing, but kindly glance, winning manners, and features set in the type of manly beauty—all conspired to make a noble dwelling for a soul more noble still. Nor was he a spoiled child of fortune; for amid her smiles and caresses

he never showed the least sign of pride, ambition or avarice. The nobles of the court, who always called upon him in their infirmities, could bestow upon him no other reward than their genuine admiration, for he would receive no compensation for his services beyond the ordinary pension attached to his position at the court. To the poor he freely gave the benefit of his knowledge and personal attention, and never left them without some alms and words of holy counsel kindly spoken.

No wonder, then, that he was known as the "great-hearted" and the "charitable." With such noble dignity, too, did he ever defend the integrity, and practise the teachings of Catholic faith, that of all the courtiers—some orthodox, some heretical, others wavering between the service of God and of mammon—not one dared advise him to sacrifice principle to the imperial will; the Emperor himself had not the boldness to tempt him. The wealthiest and the noblest houses sought alliances with him; and he met all such advances with a firm, though courteous refusal, for he had determined not to distract his mind with the care of family concerns, nor to diminish the precious hours of study and holy contemplation. Such was the friend whom God had designed to give, or rather to lend for a time, to Tigranes, to the great profit of his soul.

Julian recalled him to Constantinople, confirmed him in all his offices and honors, and loaded him

with favors, flattering himself that he could eventually win him over to his own black and unprincipled designs. Cæsarius would not accept the apartments prepared for him in the palace, perhaps because he knew too well the impious spirit that ruled within its walls. Yet the honorable and conscientious discharge of his official duties obliged him to spend there his days at least, and no one ever ventured to utter an unchristian word in his presence; the great favor of the Emperor was a shield which protected him from the attempts of even the pagans. His daily presence at the court naturally brought him before long into contact with Tigranes, and as truly lofty souls shed around them an atmosphere of noble affection, and naturally blend by an innate sympathy with others like themselves, it was not long before they were bound together by the ties of true friendship. Besides the mutual esteem which had sprung from their daily intercourse, there was another bond of affection between them in a common attachment to another great soul. Tigranes had learned that Cæsarius was from the neighborhood of Nazianzum, and his first question on their meeting was: "Do you happen to be acquainted with a certain Gregory, who studied some years ago at Athens?"

"Slightly," replied Cæsarius, smiling. "He is my own brother."

"Give me your hand," said Tigranes, joyfully, "we are not only friends, but brothers." And he

went on to tell Cæsarius how they had studied together at Athens, and how a most familiar f iendship had bound them together during that period of their lives.

"And what is our dear Gregory doing now?" he inquired in conclusion.

"I could only make him a flying visit when I was last in Cæsarea with poor Constantius. It was as much as I could do to spend a couple of days with him where he lives in retirement with a friend of his, called Basil. A closer friendship I never saw; they are like one soul in two bodies. But you must have known our friend Basil, for he and my brother were together at Athens. By-the-by, speaking of Basil, I have a letter here from him, which you would perhaps like to hear."

"Certainly I should."

Cæsarius opened the letter and read: "Basil to his friend Cæsarius, greeting. Your brother Gregory is here with us, and delights us all by his holy conversation. He and your respected father are not without anxiety about your connection with the imperial court; we share their solicitude, for you know that your family and ours are one in heart. But enough of this for the present; we trust you, and hope for the best. Should you happen to meet there a youth named Tigranes, who, according to letters lately received here, must be with the court of Julian, deal with him as a friend, because he is an intimate friend of mine as well as of your holy brother, Gregory. We were

all three fellow-students at Athens, whilst you were reading Hippocrates at Alexandria. My dear Cæsarius, it is my hope and daily prayer that we may soon meet again, either here or in Cæsarea. Would that it could be to-morrow! Farewell."

"It seems," observed Tigranes, as Cæsarius folded the letter, "that Basil and your brother Gregory are in great terror lest the court should turn your head. I cannot see what cause they have to fear, for although Julian has given himself up to the abominations of idolatry, yet he leaves every one else free to adopt what belief he pleases."

"Do not believe it so easily," said Cæsarius. "Though I am fixed in my resolve to hold my ground, the fears of our friend Basil and of my family are not wholly groundless."

"How is it then," asked Tigranes, "that your brother does not write to you?"

"Does not write to me! Feel this other letter; is it not heavy enough? But let me read it to you, it will perhaps do you no harm." And with these words he unfolded the letter and began to read:

"Gregory to Cæsarius:—My brother, we have felt no little shame at your conduct of late"—

"A fair beginning, certainly," interrupted Tigranes.

Cæsarius continued with a grave smile: "Though it is a relief to be able to speak of it to yourself, since you can appreciate it better than any one else.

To say nothing of ourselves nor of the sadness and apprehension which have come upon us since we have heard the reports which reach us concerning yourself, I could wish that you were with us to hear what is said about you and about us, not only by the members of the family, but by our friends—of course I mean the Christians. Mark, that I do not say what this one or that one mentioned, but what all say with one voice; for you know that those who are not of the household of the faith are much more given to idle talk about the deeds of absent ones than those who are of us. We have heard it repeated again and again: 'A fine thing, truly, that the near relative of a bishop should take an office at the court! This is no time to be looking for a share in the power and the honors of the gentiles and to hanker after their wealth, whilst our Father's house is in flames, and every one one of us is running the risk of forfeiting his eternal salvation. How can Cæsarius have failed to see that there is now left to us no other glory, no safety, no gain, but a generous resistance to the wickedness of the times and an uncompromising opposition to the corruptions and abominations'—"

"Your brother is certainly taking an exaggerated view of the state of things here," again interrupted Tigranes.

"Hear him through, and judge afterwards. 'With what face can the bishop now warn others not to let themselves be carried away by the current, not to pollute themselves by having any part

with the worshippers of idols? How can he venture to reprove others for their falls, when some of his own family are not clean? These are the words we hear every day from many lips. Some no doubt speak from pure friendship, others perhaps from less pure motives. I leave you to judge what must be our feelings, since we have pronounced our firm determination to serve God faithfully, and to place all our ambition in the hope of a happy eternity. Our poor father is weighed down with years and with sorrow; I strive to soothe his grief by telling him that your dutiful affection will prompt you to remove at once the cause of our distress. Should our revered mother happen to hear the least whisper of these tidings which have come to us about your present condition—we have so far succeeded in keeping her in profound ignorance on the subject—I am sure that she would not enjoy another hour of peace. You know that she is a woman, and therefore is easily overcome by grief; besides, her saintly piety would make such a blow doubly fatal.

"'Now if you have any regard for yourself and for us, take measures to change this state of things. It seems to me that you should be able to content yourself with our means and manner of life here; they are certainly sufficient for one who is satisfied to lead an honorable life without the greed of wealth and worldly honors. And if you are ever to change your manner of life, I can see no better time than the present for doing so. But if, on the

contrary, in spite of our entreaties, you choose to stay where you are in order to satisfy your ambition, I must declare to you that I wash my hands of all blame for the consequences. Meanwhile I warn you that one of two things will inevitably befall you where you are,—either you will continue to be a faithful Christian, and then your master will keep you in an inferior position, unworthy of yourself and of your hopes; or he will make much of you and raise you to higher honors, which cannot be without some loss to your highest interests; and so you will not come forth without the smell of the smoke on your garments, even if you escape the scorching of the flames.'"

"Gregory is greatly deceived," said Tigranes, as Cæsarius finished; "Julian is not a man to wrong a friend and most faithful servant. There has been a great deal said about his giving good positions to his old friends and confidants, because they are all hellenists; this is a pure exaggeration. Are not you and I, and a number of the chief officers of the army all Christians? Has he not also called several bishops and priests, and given them becoming positions in the court?"

"As for the Christians in the court," replied Cæsarius, "it may pass; but the bishops! the less we say of them the better. You know as well as I do, that he has chosen them from among the worst of their class; he has been careful to pick out those who were suspended or excommunicated. Aetius is an atheist, and a man of blood; the rest

are Donatists, Novatians, and the like. Good men and respectable clerics have nothing to do in this court."

"No, no. A little moderation, my dear Cæsarius. What if I should tell you—though I know that you will hardly believe me—that our friend Basil, nay, even your venerated brother, Gregory, received invitations from Augustus? And what answer did they make? They insulted him openly. I assure you that I myself was somewhat shocked at their expressions."

"What! Julian invited Basil and Gregory to his court?"

"It is a fact. It caused a good deal of talk among the intimates of the Emperor. I am not telling you an idle story; I saw the letters with my own eyes.* It is well for them that Julian is not the man-eating monster he is represented to be by certain dissatisfied and wordy persons, or he might have given them occasion to eat their words at some expense to themselves. Besides, Julian is Emperor, and certainly has a right to some respect."

"Indeed, you are telling me news. I knew nothing of all this."

"Yes, and moreover, it is not a thing of yesterday. These letters were sent when we first came

* These letters are extant, and may be found in the editions already quoted in this work, of the works of Julian and of St. Basil, and in the life of St. Gregory Nazianzen, with critical notes by learned commentators.

to Constantinople, and when half of the philosophers and scholars in the world received some communication from the Emperor."

"I am glad to know it, and I shall mention it in my answer to my brother's letter."

"But be discreet. Now let Valentinian and Jovian come with their eternal growling; certainly there is some reason in what they say, but they have no moderation."

Each of the two friends felt satisfied that he had given some useful hints to the other in this familiar conversation. Cæsarius, who was a few years older than Tigranes, felt some compassion for the youthful simplicity of his friend, and hoped that the severe expressions in Gregory's letter would serve as a warning against the wiles of Augustus. As for himself, he felt strong in the resolution to throw aside honors, wealth, position and all, rather than yield an inch in maintaining the principles of his faith. He had determined to write at once to his brother, and was making preparations to do so in the study of his friend, when their attention was called to a noise in the adjoining hall. Julian was returning from a review of his legions, and had bestowed the wonted largess on the troops. The two friends rose and went out to meet the Emperor.

XX.

IMPERIAL STRATEGY.

"THROUGHOUT the whole Empire," said Julian one day to a party of intimate friends, "the sacred shrines are being restored, the groves are rising again, incense and victims are growing scarce in some provinces. But all this amounts to nothing; so long as I have not succeeded in uncrowning the Galilean, my own diadem weighs heavy on my brow. That is my desire, my life's task, my glory—to crush him down in the mire."

"And why not in blood?" suggested Maximus, a magician. "You have a hundred legions; give the word and you will purge the land."

"It would be best so, but it is not possible."

"At least you might despatch the priests or the bishops."

"No, it would not do," said Julian with a sigh. "What did so much slaughter profit Diocletian and Decius?" For one enemy of the gods destroyed, a hundred more fanatical sprung up at once, like worms in a dead body."

"But yet," persisted the magician, "even iron is brought under by fire."

"Yes," replied Julian, "but souls do not undergo the same kind of change. I am not satisfied to have the gods honored with a few grains of incense from the hand; I wish to see the Galilean hated, I must do this work thoroughly."

"Augustus," said an Alexandrian priest, "the way to do this work thoroughly, is to root out clergy, monks and canons; I can swear to you from my own observation, that they are the plague of Egypt. Their very glance poisons the air, their words are death to the worship of Horus, Isis and the great Serapis."

"I shall attend to it in time. We must be cautious; should I shed a drop of blood of some cleric or of some pious lady now, I should at once be called a tyrant. The people are not yet ripe for my purposes."

"I read the thoughts of Augustus," observed a pompous looking individual with a look of great sagacity. "He will first make sure of all the army like the deified Maximian"—

"Ah! Maximian, Maximian, god-like emperor. Had you but been a little less hasty and more cautious," cried Julian. Then suddenly relapsing into silence, he seemed to be buried in deep thought.

The astute Oribasius had listened to the whole conversation without uttering a word, but when the Emperor, awaking from his meditation, turned an inquiring look upon his trusted friend and favorite courtier, the latter spoke at last:

"The most moderate course," said he, "will be

the most successful. Good laws and faithful executors. We must fetter the Christian priests, save the youth of the Empire from their wiles, silence their teachers, impoverish and gradually destroy them; all such offices must be given to men of sounder views, with positive instructions to break down the boldness of these Galileans. They will not be able to resist this slow but powerful process. Ply the knife steadily about the tree; to-day a twig will fall, to-morrow a branch, the next day a root will yield, then the bark, and finally the trunk must die, and thus, Augustus, before your locks are even streaked with age, you will have restored our worship in all the empire."

"Well said, Oribasius!" cried Julian, approvingly. "You have caught my own idea, but the gods have given me another inspiration too."

"Let us hear it!" cried all with one voice.

Julian, with an expression of fiendish delight, and complacently stroking his beard, explained his purpose:

"All that you have just suggested I had already purposed to do, and much more besides. The blood of the Galileans would be an unspeakably delicious treat to the heavenly deities and to me. I have already made an offering of it to them; but it can be only when those miscreants shall be few and scattered; and this must be our care for the present. Meanwhile, the first step towards social regeneration will be to find some captivating name which will take hold of the multitude."

"What shall it be?" asked Oribasius.

"Freedom of religious worship," replied Julian, with the look and tone of a man who is sure that his enemy cannot escape him.

From the spirit of the preceding conversation it is not hard to conjecture what manner of freedom was meant, and time only served to show more clearly the hypocritical and treacherous character of the man. He made a great parade of the favors which he was so ready to bestow upon the Christians,—or, as he always styled them, the Galileans,—which favors consisted in conferring offices at court or other gifts upon Arian bishops, who were at that time very numerous in the East. Under color of not wishing to trammel the action of the courts of justice, he approved the barbarous severity with which the judges, appointed by himself, vented their hatred on the faithful servants of Christ. Among these victims was the martyr, St. Elpidius. When the announcement of his death was brought to Julian, "very good," said the Emperor. "You condemned him to be tied to the tails of horses and dragged to death. He has had a good ride of it. Well, it was his own doing, and no fault of mine; I offered him honors and offices if he would but declare openly for me. He refused, and the courts have condemned him, and he deserved it."

"You are too merciful, Cæsar," said a heathen priest who was standing by. "They do but abuse your clemency."

"Let them abuse it," replied Julian, with feigned compassion. "At least it shall not be said that wisdom has been wrought into my subjects by means of torments."

"Divine clemency!" cried the hypocritical priest.

"I am never weary of repeating, 'Freedom of religious worship! Let the Hellenists, let the Galileans enjoy full liberty.' There is Acebolus, who acknowledged to me yesterday that he was now wholly converted from his former folly. Let him say whether I ever used the slightest threat towards him. No, it is not my nature. Good reasons, instructions, exhortations—those are my only inducements."

"Long live your philosophy!" cried a number of sophists, who always formed a part of the Emperor's train.

"My only trouble now," continued the Emperor, "is that some few tribunes still persist in always opposing me in everything; and they too remain as witnesses of my tolerant spirit, for I shall banish only a couple of them, merely by way of example for the sake of discipline. By Jove! they might as well pull my hair or tweak my nose as thus insult me in public."

The tribunes in question were the two brothers, Valens and Valentinian, and Jovian. When Tigranes heard that there was some difficulty between Julian and these tribunes, he hastened to Oribasius for information, and learned that Jovian, when called upon by Julian to offer pagan honors to

the Genius of the city, had replied by unclasping his military belt and resigning it, with his other honors, into the hands of the Emperor, who refused to receive his resignation.

Among other strategems used by Julian to catch the simple and unwary, was the cunning arrangement of circumstances which often brought his intended victims safely into his snares. Sometimes he wrought upon their self-love, sometimes upon their thoughtlessness to entrap them into some outward act of conformity with his idolatrous practices. For instance, knowing that the Christians considered it a profession of belief in the heathen gods to eat meats offered up to those divinities, he one day ordered that everything displayed for sale in the market, fruits, herbs, vegetables, bread, fish and flesh meat, should be consecrated to the presiding deity of the market-place. This proceeding, however, proved more hurtful to himself than to those against whom it was directed; for the people, who were by no means disposed to starve, and even less to commit what they considered an act of apostasy, threatened to rise in rebellion, and so menacing was their attitude that the Emperor was forced to revoke his ill-advised order. And yet the infatuated apostate did not give up his system of double-dealing. One day after a military review and distribution of largesses to the soldiers—the very occasion mentioned above in connection with Jovian—Julian, on his return from the prætorian camp, turned into the

basilica dedicated to the Genius of the city, to offer sacrifice to the guardian divinity. At the door stood the minister whose office it was to sprinkle with the lustral water those who entered the temple for religious purposes. Valentinian, whose official character kept him very near to the person of the Emperor, received of course his share of the ceremonial sprinkling, when, quick as thought, he knocked down the officiating minister, tore from his military cloak the part which had been defiled by the heathen rite and trampled it under foot, in the very presence of Augustus.

Another characteristic action of Julian's became known soon after the events just mentioned, and caused an intense excitement in Constantinople, and in other parts of the empire. It happened on the occasion of a review of the troops, while the legionaries were advancing to the throne of Augustus to receive the usual largess. Julian naturally hated the Labarum with all his heart, because it was preëminently a Christian symbol; accordingly, he seized an early opportunity to remove it from the army, and to put in its place the Roman eagles and other emblems in an attitude of respect towards the old SENATUS POPULUS QUE ROMANUS. And as a further grievance to the Christian soldiers, who formed the larger part of the army, he restored the old heathen practice of burning incense before these standards to the Genius of the Emperor. The standards were set up close beside the stand on which the Emperor sat to distribute

the largesses; several officers were posted near the stand to see that every soldier, before receiving his money, threw some grains of incense on the pan of live coals which were set before the standards. The more wary Christians, noticing something unusual in the appearance of the new ensigns, now brought out for the first time, examined them as they approached, and refused the act of homage. The majority of the legionaries, however, came forward without perceiving the trick; thinking that the Labarum still held its wonted position, and hurried on, besides, by the officers who were in the plot, they unwittingly did homage to the idolatrous emblems. Julian, after the review, boasted loudly of the favorable change in the sentiments of the legions, as if this involuntary act had been a deliberate profession of apostasy. But he soon learned that his Christian soldiers were anything but apostates at heart.

Among those who had been tricked into bowing before the standards and burning incense to the Genius of Julian, was a brave and stalwart young officer named Romanus, whose generous and cheerful disposition made him a general favorite in the army. After the review he went with the other officers to the banquet which usually followed the ceremony, and before beginning he blessed himself, as usual, with the sign of the cross. One of his companions, perceiving the action, turned to him, and, either through malice or thoughtlessness, exclaimed:

"What are you about? Are you going to turn back again to Christ? You are an incomprehensible fellow, certainly."

"What do you mean?" asked Romanus.

"Mean!" rejoined the other; "Did you not just now renounce Jesus Christ?"

"I!" exclaimed the noble youth, indignantly, "I, Romanus, renounce my Lord?" he continued, laying his hand upon his heart. "Never! never!"

"Why, you did it a moment ago, when you burned incense to the Genius of the Emperor and to Jupiter."

"What do you mean? You are dreaming. I offered incense to the Labarum, to our Lord Christ. I saluted the image of Augustus."

"Well, there was an image of Jupiter within it, and of Mars and Mercury besides."

"It is impossible."

"Indeed there was; and to tell you the truth, I could not help crossing myself when I saw *you* cast the incense upon the coals. You may be sure that Julian reckons you among those who have gone over to his side."

These words, which had been heard by all, were followed by a dead silence; every Christian looked at his neighbor inquiringly, and then began to examine his own feelings. Every countenance bore evident marks of astonishment, grief and indignation. Romanus turned deadly pale and trembled in every limb, not with fear, but with horror at the thought of what he had done. Then

starting up suddenly, his heart full of a noble resolution, he broke the general silence; bringing down his clenched hand upon the table before him with fearful vehemence, he exclaimed:

"We are betrayed! These coins are the reward of Judas; they will burn my hands and my heart until I can cast them down at the feet of our betrayer. Follow me who will!"

In an instant he had gained the door, and rushed out towards the imperial palace, but not alone. His comrades, strongly moved by the voice of conscience and by his noble example, followed him in a body. The tidings of this movement had soon spread to the other legions—the Christians, roused to indignation, hastened to join the band of Romanus; they marched into the city crying out against the perfidious act of treachery, and swearing to be faithful to Christ; the streets and public squares, as they passed, resounded with their protestations that they were not false to the faith, that they had been betrayed. "We are not apostates!" they cried. "We have not denied the faith! We are Christians! Live Jesus Christ, the Son of God!" And so, loudly proclaiming their faith, they rushed into the palace, breaking down all opposition.

Julian, surrounded by his usual suite, happened to be crossing an open gallery on his way to the dining-hall. The approach of this throng of angry legionaries, their excited looks and loud cries, sent a thrill of apprehension through his heart, for his

first thought was of a military revolt. But when he saw them halt at a respectful distance, Romanus alone advancing towards him, he recovered his wonted boldness, and asked the intruder:

"Soldier, what do you seek?"

"Take back your money," replied Romanus, casting the gold pieces at the Emperor's feet, "we did not know that it was the price of apostasy."

Then the marble pavement rang with the shower of gold coins, thrown down by the Christian soldiers, who broke out into loud cries: "We are Christians! We will die, but not betray our faith! You have betrayed us! Live the Lord Christ!"

And before Julian or his courtiers could recover from the terror, shame and rage which filled their souls, the brave soldiers turned away with joyful countenances, as if relieved of a heavy burden, and once more passed through the city on their way to the camp. Everywhere, as they passed, they were greeted with enthusiastic cheers, and hailed as generous confessors of the faith.

But ere they reached their quarters the orders of the infuriated Emperor had already arrived. Romanus and the other ringleaders were to be put in irons immediately on their arrival, and, on the following day, beheaded in the presence of the army. The tidings of the martyrdom, which awaited these noble champions of the faith, was soon noised abroad, all Constantinople was astir. The dawn of the next day beheld the place appointed for the execution of the sentence densely

crowded with spectators, and when the prisoners were led forth from the camp, as if their own great ardor for martyrdom had been radiated into the souls of the multitude, the immense throng received them with an enthusiastic greeting which rent the sky, and resounded far across the waters of the Bosphorus. All eyes were turned upon Romanus, who marched lightly and cheerfully forward, loaded as he was with fetters, and ever as he passed along he was greeted with sighs and groans of compassion, with words and signs of encouragement, and all entreated the prayers of the noble martyrs of Jesus Christ. The whole scene was more like one of the glorious martyr triumphs of the first ages of the Church than the cruel prelude of a military execution.

According to the usual custom in such cases, the youngest of the condemned was to be executed first, and Romanus, kneeling with his head bent forward, was joyfully awaiting his crown. His companions stood around, praying for him and for themselves, their eyes raised to the heaven which they hoped soon to enter in joyful procession; the deacons stood by with sponges concealed under their cloaks, ready to secure the blood of the martyrs; the faithful pressed forward, eager to dip handkerchiefs and napkins in the same precious stream; the executioner, with arms bared to the elbows, his sword still sheathed, covered his face with his hands—he dared not look upon the noble victim, but awaited in silence the

signal to begin his bloody work. Suddenly, from the outermost verge of the great multitude, in the direction of the city-gate, came a tumultuous wave of great commotion, and a loud cry was raised: "Hold! Hold! A respite! A respite!" The crowd quickly gave way to right and left, and through their opened ranks a courier from the Emperor came spurring to the place of execution, just in time to stay the sword almost ready to descend upon the noble youth. The commanding officer read the despatch, which commuted the sentence of death into that of forfeiture of all military rank, honors and rewards, with banishment for life. The decree was received with universal joy. Romanus alone, rising slowly to his feet, broke out into sighs and tears: "Unhappy man that I am!" he exclaimed, "a moment more, and I hoped to enter heaven bearing my palm; now Augustus has snatched it from me. It is a just judgment of God; I was not worthy of so great an honor!"

The crowd gradually dispersed, each one making his own comments on the motives of Julian in changing the punishment. Few ascribed it to any feeling of moderation or returning generosity, nearly all to a sense of shame, and to the reflection that such a stain on the imperial purple would have branded its wearer with eternal disgrace. One old man expressed the common feeling of apprehension as he muttered: "Let him but once get his nails well buried in the body of the Republic, and you will see strange things."

Julian had, in the meantime, been kept informed of every detail, and the successive messengers, as they came in, found him pacing his private apartment, like a caged tiger, foaming with rage. He stopped from time to time only to turn to his sole companions, Oribasius and Maximus, and to utter imprecations or threats of vengeance.

"Ungrateful citizens!" he exclaimed, "to take the part of those who insult me in my own palace! And then you will come to claim some new privileges or favors from me. Give me but time to carry out my plans in Asia, and you shall feel my favors!"

"They are Galileans," suggested his companions, "it is their way to adore criminals. Do they not worship the very cross?"

"Yes," cried Julian furiously, "and I will give them plenty of it, I will give it to them with all my heart. May the gods favor my designs! But let us think of Asia for the present; let us leave this accursed city, this air poisoned by the breath of the Galileans. Now for Asia! Now for Persia! And then"—

XXI.

ST. ARTEMIUS.

JULIAN'S hypocrisy was no longer of any avail to conceal his fixed purpose of persecuting the Church, and of rooting out, if his plans did but succeed, the very name of Jesus Christ; if any doubt remained of this satanic design, it was dispelled when he gave up the Church of Africa to the fury of the Donatists; then seizing the occasion offered by the disturbances to which this injustice gave rise, he charged the Christians with sedition, and added his own bloody violence to that of the heretics. Every stage of the Emperor's march, from Constantinople to Antioch, whence he purposed to start on his Persian campaign, was disgraced by deeds of shame and cruelty. At Pessinus, mere boys, for the only crime of fidelity to the faith of the Church, were, by his orders, torn to pieces; in Galatia, the priest Philoromus was murdered for the tyrant's pleasure; he wreaked his impious rage on Basil, a priest of Ancyra, and gave up to a most cruel death Eustochia, a virgin of Tarsus. To these personal acts of brutal barbarity, worthy of Decius

and Diocletian, were added many more and worse atrocities of heathen magistrates, and even of private individuals emboldened by the open encouragement and example of their superiors.

Already, before the arrival of Julian, Antioch had been placed under the authority of pagan officers and tools of the Emperor. "God help us!" said the holy priest Paulinus, the strength and consolation of the clergy in that metropolis; "God help us! Every day I hear of some new deed of destruction in the churches of Asia, of Egypt and of Italy. We are at the mercy of men of blood, and the Emperor is the leader of them all. How else could the heathen priesthood flourish with impunity? How could the leaders of heresy hold up their heads so proudly, and boastingly threaten and foretell, as they do, ruin to our churches and banishment, prison, or death to us?"

The people of Antioch, keen-witted and satirical Greeks, did not hide the disgust and indignation they felt at seeing the Emperor parading the streets at all hours of the day and night, surrounded by a herd of degraded eunuchs and shameless women, going to offer sacrifice now at one, now at another shrine of heathen notoriety. They laughed contemptuously as he passed with his motley crew, they wrote satires and circulated witty sayings which stung Julian to the quick; but he thought it prudent to dissemble for the moment, and so, swallowing his wrath as best he could in public,

he put off the day of vengeance until his return from Persia. But in private, among his own, he gave full vent to his pent-up feelings. "Wo to this froward and sneering brood," he cried, "if I return victorious!" And then, as an earnest of what might be looked for on his return from the campaign, he relieved to some extent his rage at the insults offered him in the city and his untiring hatred against Christianity, by an act of cruel and barbarous spite directed against two priests equally illustrious for learning and piety, and greatly beloved by the people of Antioch. At first he thought to humble them by a trial of philosophy and eloquence, but, to his great rage and mortification, he was compelled to retire from the contest, defeated and covered with confusion. Then under cover of indignation at what he termed their insolence, Julian ordered some of his minions to supplement the verbal contest with heavy scourges. A great number of citizens had come together to hear the discussion, and when this cruel order was given by Julian, a thrill of horror and indignation ran through the multitude. Then followed a dead silence. For a time no sound was heard but the whizzing of the lashes and the quick, sharp blows, as they fell upon the backs of the unresisting victims, when suddenly a voice was raised, and in a loud and clear tone came the words: "Augustus, how dare you thus cruelly persecute holy and innocent victims? You too are mortal, and God, who gave you the empire, may take it from you again!"

Pale and trembling with rage, the Emperor stayed the cruel work, and cried out, "Where is that daring villain?"

All looks were turned toward the group of officers about the Emperor (for from among them the voice had come), when one of their number, the Prefect of Egypt, stepped forth. He had but recently come to Antioch with his legions, to swell the imperial forces preparing for the Persian campaign, and his dignity gave him a place very near the Emperor's person. But Julian had not yet had time to speak with him, and did not even know him by sight. Every eye was fixed upon the robust and martial form of the venerable old officer as he stood, clothed in his white Egyptian tunic, in the presence of the angry tyrant.

"What Prefect is this?" asked Julian, recognizing his insignia of office.

"The Prefect of Egypt," answered several ready sycophants.

"What, Artemius!" cried Julian, foaming with rage, and looking upon the calm face of the old man, as if he would have transpierced him with the flames which shot from his piercing eyes. "Then this is the Artemius who plotted the death of my brother Gallus. Thanks to the gods and to Apollo, he has betrayed himself, and I shall punish him as the murderer of a prince deserves to be punished. Ten ordinary deaths would not come up to his desert; but let him die to-morrow; to-day he shall pay only for his insolent speech. Executioners, seize him!"

The noble victim was seized, stripped of his military belt and decorations and bound. The brutal executioners then gathered around him and scourged him with heavy leather scourges, until his body was one ghastly wound, and the ground at his feet ran with his blood—and all the while the noble martyr never uttered a word or a groan, nor showed any sign of pain. The murmurs and suppressed imprecations of the people were beginning to grow louder, and Julian himself began to feel ashamed of the brutal hatred he was showing towards a noble officer of the Empire, a man of venerable age, and known innocence. Rising from his seat, he ordered the punishment to cease for the time, and directed the officer in command to keep the prisoner in irons until further orders.

The hatred awakened in the breast of Julian by the fearless rebuke of Artemius was too deep-rooted and malignant to be washed out even by the blood which had been spilled on this occasion. The two offenders, whose innocence the high-souled officer had dared to proclaim, were exiled, but their champion was kept for new and more painful tortures, and every fresh infliction was accompanied by some hypocritical profession of pity, or some attempts to persuade the victim to betray his faith and to adopt the professions of the apostate Emperor, who never failed to improve these occasions to vent his bitter hatred against Christianity, to justify his cruelty and to abuse his predecessors, Constantine and Constantius. But

Artemius, though a soldier, was well enough acquainted with the teachings of both the Christian Church and the heathen priests, to meet all the sophisms of his polemical judge, and even to turn his opponent's weapons against himself, for he pressed him so hard with passages from the most learned heathen philosophers and from the Sibylline oracles, which were at that time very generally familiar to the pagans, and urged his arguments with such clearness, force and readiness, that all who heard him were struck with wonder. Julian, for very shame, felt the words dying on his lips when he would have replied. The greatest discomfiture suffered by the apostate was the clear and unanswerable defence by which Artemius cleared himself of the charge of complicity in the murder of Gallus. But when he replied to the spiteful abuse in which Julian indulged against the great Constantine, he raised his head proudly, and shaking his white locks: "Do you come here to me," he replied indignantly, "to vilify the greatest of the Roman Cæsars? To me who fought for the Republic under his standard when I was as yet but a fair-haired youth? To me, who stood by his side and with the whole Roman army saw the bright cross which was shown to him in the heavens, in the broad light of day, and read with my own eyes the promise of victory written with the rays of the sun in the mid-day sky? Cease, youthful Augustus; no more of these foul words and groundless calumnies! It

shocks me to wear your livery, when I read in your letters and hear from your lips the frequent and profane oaths you swear by the god of the Sun. Would you raise to life again the rotten and fetid carcass of dead superstitions? How much more nobly would you guard the interests of the empire and your own, by humbling yourself before the Lord Christ. He is clement and merciful towards sinners if they do but repent. Even now"—

All those who were present showed their strong sympathy with these noble sentiments, even Julian had been for a moment overcome by the eloquent appeal; but as soon as he heard the exhortation to repentance, the evil spirit within him was stirred up, and with the air and tone of one who felt himself deeply insulted, he exclaimed angrily: "Rash old man, do you dare thus insolently to tax me with impiety? The instruments of the torturers shall avenge my insulted honor!" And indeed, the executioners applied to the holy Martyr all the implements of torture at their command. But the rack, the iron hooks, the heated irons, and sharp knives were of no avail; the brave old man never flinched or showed the least sign of weakness. The Christians exulted in the triumph of the Martyr, while the tyrant writhed with shame and vexation at his defeat.

Tigranes had felt his heart moved to pity and compassion for Artemius from the beginning, both because of the venerable age of the old man, and

because this sudden charge, brought against him without any show of proof, seemed to him but a cloak to Julian's hatred for everything Christian. He could not bring himself to be present at these repeated interviews and tortures; but when he heard of the cruel punishments inflicted, of the marvellous eloquence of the sufferer and his heroic constancy, he could not resist a strong desire to speak with so remarkable a man. He accordingly went very early one morning to the prison, and was readily admitted, thanks to his dignity of private secretary to the Emperor, though strict orders had been given that no one should be allowed to enter. He found the holy Martyr confined in a horrid dungeon, badly ventilated, and so scantily lighted by a small opening in the roof, that he would not have known where to look for the prisoner, but for the noise of the chains which clanked on the stone floor as the old man rose from prayer, and asked:

Who is there?"

"A brother in Jesus Christ," answered Tigranes, carefully closing the iron door behind him.

"The peace of Jesus Christ be with you."

"And with thy spirit."

"But indeed," continued Tigranes, after these first greetings, then of ordinary use among the Christians, "you must suffer very much."

"You mistake," answered Artemius, joyfully. "Not even amid all the comforts and pleasures of my palace did I ever enjoy hours of purer joy than

now. Jesus Christ has shown His mercy to an unworthy servant. But now this gloomy dungeon was filled with the splendor of His presence, and from His own divine lips I received the promise of a crown already prepared for me in heaven; He has declared to me that He will confess me before His Father, because I have confessed Him before men. At His words I felt that life and strength were restored to my limbs, while my soul was filled with heavenly delights. O the unspeakable goodness of the Lord!"

The prisoner had risen at the entrance of Tigranes and stood beneath the opening in the roof. By the slender stream of light which entered, Tigranes saw before him a venerable man almost naked; and, indeed, there was left no trace on his body of the cruel punishments he had endured.

Tigranes, impelled by an irresistible feeling of awe and reverence, threw himself at the feet of the heroic confessor, and kissing his chains, exclaimed, "Glory be to Jesus Christ for ever and ever!"

"No, no, my brother, cease!" cried the holy Martyr, withdrawing himself from the homage of Tigranes. "The wretched Artemius does not deserve the honors due to martyrs. Many and great are my sins; if you did but know them, you would pray for me instead of kissing my chains."

"And yet you braved the anger of Cæsar for the sake of justice," said Tigranes, whose reverence was increased a hundred-fold by the sincere humility of the old man, "and while every part of your

body was streaming with blood you sang glad hymns of praise to Jesus Christ."

"And I had good reason for it. I trust that this momentary torture may help to appease the wrath of God heaped up against me by my multiplied offences."

"Father, what do you say? These sufferings have set the crown upon your virtues. Jesus Christ Himself has promised you the kingdom of heaven."

"Yes, and that promise is my great comfort; infinite mercy has granted it to my weakness, though I deserved nothing but indignation. Learn, young man, the history of my prevarication, and may it be a useful lesson to you in the perilous times in which we live."

Tigranes leaned back against a projecting stone in the wall opposite to the speaker, and listened in an attitude of fixed attention as the narrative proceeded.

"You must know," continued Artemius, "that I was once, according to the world's notion, great, illustrious and powerful. Constantine and his son Constantius, seemed to vie with each other in loading me with honors and power; all Egypt trembled at the sound of my name—and I abused my good fortune. To keep the favor of the Court, I was senseless enough to join hands with the enemies of the Divine Word. O Christ, my Lord, let my present grief move Thee to mercy! Yes, I favored and helped on the Arian impiety; I gave support

to George, the intruder thrust by the Emperor into the Episcopal See of Alexandria, and I did not move a finger to check him when he began to rage like a wild beast against the Catholic clergy, the monks and consecrated virgins. So far was I led by the miserable ambition of pleasing Augustus, that I even began to persecute the much wronged Bishop Athanasius, as he lay concealed in a quiet hermitage, even Athanasius, that sublime hero, than whom the Christian world holds none more holy or venerable. How bitter now is the remembrance of that fatal night when I led an armed band up the Nile, and landed at Tabenna. Merciful God, strike out that day from the record of my life! We rowed up the stream with muffled oars and landing near the Monastery of Paba, treacherously surrounded it. Not the memory of the great Pacomius, nor reverence for the world-renowned holiness of the dwellers in the sacred place could restrain my sinful ambition for favor. The defenceless religious trembled when they saw me enter surrounded by armed men; wrapping themselves up in their goat-skin cloaks and hiding their faces in their white cowls, they quietly awaited the stroke of death, for they expected nothing else from the minister of Arian oppression. I ordered the Abbot to give up to me the rebel Athanasius by command of the Emperor.

"He is not here," replied the man of God.

"That we shall soon ascertain," said I haughtily and with a threatening gesture. My followers

scoured the monastery and pried into every corner, but they did not find the Saint; a merciful God spared me the fresh sacrilege of laying violent hands upon His anointed. Even then my conscience began to feel the sting of remorse; filled with shame and with dread of the divine vengeance, I strove to reassure the monks and invited them to come with me to the church to pray for me.

"No," they answered with one voice, "it is not lawful for us to hold communion in prayer with the Arians."

"I had resolved to go to the church, but I was obliged to go alone. I knelt to pray, when, strange to say, sleep came upon me there, and in my sleep I saw a fearful vision. It seemed to me that I was suddenly surrounded by multitudes of angels, who looked upon me with dreadful anger and indignation; some were brandishing heavy scourges, others flaming swords. Terrified and trembling from head to foot, I cried for mercy and pardon, promising to do penance for my crime. Then I awaked in terror, feeling as if I had just been drawn out from the sea, and I found myself covered with blood which was pouring from my nostrils. To be brief, I confessed my sin before those holy servants of God and went back, a changed man, to Alexandria. Happy will you be, my brother, if ever it is given you to kneel before the blessed Athanasius and receive his blessing."

"God grant I may! God grant it!" cried Tigranes fervently.

"If such be your good fortune," continued Artemius, "remember to tell him that his cruel persecutor, the wretched Artemius, before giving his blood for Jesus Christ, wept bitterly for his former crime and implored his forgiveness."

"Fear not," said Tigranes. "It shall be my first word if ever my eyes may be so blest as to behold Athanasius."

"I did strive to atone for my fault by great zeal for God's house, by destroying the temples of pagan worship and the haunts of pagan luxury; but my repentance was not yet pure and perfect, for I had not yet entirely broken with the heretics; but now our merciful Lord has given me the occasion of making up, I trust, what was wanting. When I was summoned hither with my legions I had no thought but of fighting the enemies of the Republic. But when I witnessed the cruel punishment inflicted upon those innocent servants of God, I remembered that I too had once been a persecutor, and feared that if I remained silent their blood might be required of me. You know the rest. Brother, help me to return thanks to our Lord."

Tigranes had listened with rapt attention to the humble confession of the holy Martyr, and he saw the tears which coursed each other along his furrowed cheeks and down his white beard, and when the old man ceased, he threw himself at his feet, kissed his hands and the rough chains which held him bound, and exclaimed:

"Father, God has washed out the record of your faults with your blood. Happy are you now; but can I do anything for you?"

"I need prayers—nothing else. Death has already been promised me by our Lord Jesus Christ."

"And do not forget me, I entreat you, in the hour of your triumph; remember, too, my betrothed, a Christian virgin."

But the time had come for Tigranes to withdraw. Artemius very soon received his sentence in these terms: "Artemius, having insulted the gods and transgressed the Roman laws and ours, having declared himself a Christian instead of a Roman and a Hellenist, and having confessed himself a Galilean, though a Prefect and an imperial officer, is condemned to the extreme penalty, death. We order that his head be struck off with the sword."

Nor was this the only blood shed in Alexandria during the brief sojourn of Julian. At the same time Tigranes was receiving letters from Basil and Gregory of Nazianzum, telling him of the extortions, the robberies and other deeds of violence committed by order of Augustus in their native city; from all parts of the East and West he heard the groans of the Churches suffering under a most treacherous and often bloody persecution. All this had its effect; Tigranes was becoming daily more and more disgusted with the conduct of affairs, more and more eager to hasten to Carrhae,

to have done with that infamous court which was working so much evil in all parts of the world. But the advance of the army was put off from day to day, and he saw no hope of getting away until after the campaign, when suddenly Julian himself offered him the occasion for which he had been so long sighing.

"My dear friend," said Julian to him one day, "do you see this batch of letters? They are from Alexandria, and they tell me of business in which I wish to engage your tried fidelity and secrecy—just as in the matter of that answer from Carrhae! Now listen, and then tell me whether you have the heart to undertake what I propose. You know that Alexandria is the apple of my eye, and now the Alexandrians have done me the greatest favor I could have desired. Their bishop was a tool of Constantius; you may have heard of him, one George"—

"Have they not Athanasius?" interrupted Tigranes.

"They had; but Constantius dethroned him and set up in his stead this George, a marvel of craftiness, avarice and meanness even for a Galilean bishop. The only good trait in the man was that he kept down the monks and other over pious fools by a judicious application of the scourge; I could have found it in my heart to keep him in his office for this alone, but the fellow has brought down destruction on his own head. He suddenly took a notion to quarrel with the worshippers of the

gods, and then exasperated and insulted them by publicly exposing the mysteries of Mithras to the mockery of the profane populace; just fancy, he even threatened to force his entrance into the temple of Serapis, to violate the most sacred sanctuary of all Egypt! I have already settled my accounts with Artemius, who was his right hand in all this; the Alexandrians have done as much for George himself. The worshippers of Mithras, hearing how I had dealt with Artemius, understood that the hour had come to avenge the outraged honor of the gods.

"They made short work of it too; he was seized, bound, seated upon a camel with his face to the animal's tail, and while they drove him thus through the city they loaded him with blows and insults; finally, they despatched him with several other disturbers of the public peace. Now here is what I would have you do, if you are a man. I have sent a severe rebuke to the Senate and people of Alexandria. When a man is Emperor, you know, he cannot always speak his true sentiments. But still, you understand, I must apply the salve to public disorders; though, of course, I should be a fool to be really angry with those who rid me of my enemies, and therefore it is necessary that some one should speak to them from me by word of mouth, and explain the meaning of those despatches. But this is only a secondary consideration; the main point of your mission will be to make sure of the splendid library of this George,

which I have determined to secure for my own use, without the loss of a single volume. It is very odd that that blockhead should have had such a passion for really good books, which he never did or could read, and it is quite proper that some one should inherit them who can make good use of them. True, I have issued a stern decree about this matter of the books, but they will not be safe enough unless I have some trusty agent there to watch my interests. Athanasius is capable of stepping in and securing, through some third person, the best of the books. That Athanasius has already given me some trouble, and I am thinking seriously of settling with him very speedily"—

"And I run, I fly," interrupted Tigranes, who began to see the way open for carrying out his cherished design. "Now to save Athanasius," he said to himself.

"That is just what I expected of you," replied Julian. "You are my man; you anticipate my very thoughts."

"Set your mind at rest, Augustus. You shall be served as Tigranes knows how to serve."

On the very next morning Tigranes, furnished with the imperial seal and letters patent, was off for Alexandria, fully determined to warn Athanasius of the danger which threatened his life.*

* The details contained in this chapter concerning St. Artemius, are all taken from the complete *Acts* published by the learned Card. Mai, and ascribed by him to St. John Damascene.

XXII.

TRIUMPH OF THE FAITH.

ARTEMIUS was not the only victim contributed by Antioch to satisfy the anti-Christian fury of Julian; in every quarter of the city families were mourning the loss of some of their number, who had suddenly disappeared, and were never heard of more. Young boys and girls, youths and maidens alike, were the victims of this cruel visitation. No one knew then how to account for this strange disappearance save only Julian and the heathen priests—these were the living victims sacrificed by the hand of the Emperor himself to the demons whom he invoked to crown his arms with victory in the approaching campaign against the Persians. They were seized by secret agents of the unscrupulous Cæsar, and hurried away in the darkness of night to the underground vaults of the palace, where the horrid rites were performed. It was no motive of consideration for the feelings of his Christian subjects that led Julian to shun the light of day in the commission of such atrocities, but it was his policy to pass for a mild and patient prince. Yet not even all his craft and

policy was able always to keep down the open expression of that diabolical spite and hatred toward Christianity which had obtained full sway in his soul; hence the deeds of open violence and cruelty which stained the streets of Antioch and of other cities. Indeed it was through no fault of his that Athanasius, the great Patriarch of Alexandria, did not pay forfeit with his life for his Christian faith and firmness. It will suffice to mention here two other illustrious victims whose fate was intended to strike terror into the hearts of the faithful of Antioch, though to the disappointment and rage of Julian, it served but to hasten the final triumph of the faith. Julian's brother Gallus had, a few years before the events of which we are now speaking, erected a monument to the memory of the holy martyr Babilas, near the fountain of Castalia, in Daphne, a beautiful spot near Antioch. The design of Gallus in placing the bones of the holy champion of Christ in this spot, and in rearing this memorial of Christian constancy, was to atone by their sacred presence for the abominations which desecrated the place in the worship of Apollo, who was said by the poets to have met and wooed the nymph Daphne on this spot. Julian had long sought some response concerning his projected campaign from the famous oracle at Daphne, but Apollo seemed to have been suddenly struck with dumbness in this neighborhood; at last a sullen answer was obtained from the god, to the effect that he

could not speak until "an offensive corpse was removed from this spot." This much we learn from the words of Julian himself in his *Misopogon*, a work still extant. It was not easy for Julian to gratify the divinity and himself by unearthing and burning the sacred remains, for the people of Antioch honored St. Babilas as their special patron and protector; yet the Emperor was bent upon having a response from the god, and the relics must be removed in some way or other. After much deliberation Julian finally summoned the bishop, St. Miletius, and ordered him to remove from Daphne the remains of his dead. The holy prelate understood at once the bearing of this order, and took it as an interposition of divine mercy that no worse disposition had been made of the sacred relics; he accordingly prepared to carry out the imperial decree.

The tidings of the proposed removal of the relics spread like wildfire among the inhabitants of the city, and was as quickly communicated to the neighboring towns and hamlets. The fervent devotion of the Christians was aroused; they determined to solemnize the translation with unusual pomp, and, while honoring the saint, to throw shame and confusion upon the persecutor. From all parts of the country, for miles around, they poured into Daphne; the sacred grove of Apollo was thronged with devout Christian worshippers. The remains of the Saint were taken up with the greatest reverence and solemnity, and

placed upon a splendidly decorated car. So great was the throng that the clergy could hardly keep in order the procession which stretched along the high-road leading to Antioch. Among those present on this occasion was the then youthful John Chrysostom, who was at a future day to become the eloquent historian of this magnificent triumph, and to spread its renown to the ends of the earth through all time. Thousands of lighted tapers glittered along the endless line, clouds of incense canopied the procession, joyful strains of sacred music filled the air; and to crown the martyr's triumph and the tyrant's rage, the procession passed under the very windows of the imperial palace. Julian heard the chant from the inner apartment, into which he had withdrawn to shut out the sight of the hateful pomp, and his confusion was at its height when the wave of sacred harmony bore to his ears the words of the Royal Prophet: "Let them be all confounded that adore graven things, and that glory in their idols."*

"Impious blasphemers! Wretches!" roared the infuriated apostate.

Then the clear young voices of a choir of boys and girls, repeating the verses alternately, saluted his ears again: "Let them be all confounded that adore graven things, and that glory in their idols."

"Infamous rabble!" shouted Julian. "What! insult me in my own palace! Ungrateful and cur-

* Psalm 96, 7.

rish brood! I would have given you freedom and plenty. I protect the religion of Rome, and you deride what I hold dearest! Outraged majesty shall be avenged! Officer, call the prefect." While the attendant was hastening to summon the prefect, Julian paced the room with rapid strides, gesticulating and howling like an energumen. "Proud and obstinate race! Woe to you when I return from the war! By the great god of the sun I shall make you rue this hour, I shall make you weep for what you have sung to-day!"

The entrance of the prefect, Sallust, interrupted this violent soliloquy. "Prefect," cried Julian, as soon as he saw the officer, "go, set the troops upon this mob of fanatical rebels. Kill as many as you can, and let the rest take warning from their punishment."

Though a pagan, Sallust was not cruel, and moreover he saw that the wholesale execution commanded by Julian would only confirm the growing conviction of the Emperor's bloodthirsty disposition. But some show had to be made of carrying out the imperial order; he accordingly seized and threw into prison a certain number of the common people, whom he soon after set at liberty, with the exception of a young boy named Theodore, who had deliberately turned himself around so as to face the windows of the palace, and, raising his voice above those of his companions, had defiantly sung the obnoxious verse: "Let them be all confounded that adore graven

things, and that glory in their idols." The heroic little fellow was scourged to death, singing sacred melodies until he expired under the lash. He cried out joyfully to those who stood about him that an angel of God protected him so that he felt no pain from the blows; the Christians were filled with joy, and encouraged the youthful martyr by their looks and gestures, some even by words. Not long after this occurrence the temple of Apollo at Daphne was struck by lightning and burned to the ground.* Julian declared his conviction that the temple had been fired by the Christians, and seized the occasion to order fresh executions and persecutions. Among other outrages committed by his order, was the sack of the basilica, generally known as the "Golden," on account of the wealth lavished upon its decorations and sacred furniture by the piety of the faithful. The minister who carried out this order (and the achievement would have done honor to Julian himself) was a nephew and namesake of the Emperor, an apostate like his uncle. This Count Julian learned that a holy priest named Theodoret was in the habit of visiting the Christians in the city to strengthen their faith as well as their courage, and to offer up the Holy Sacrifice for their spiritual nourishment and consolation. He caused the holy man to be dragged before his tribunal, and, eager to win a complete victory at the outset, he

* *Vid.* St. John Chrysostom. *Discourse on St. Babilas.*

ordered the torture to be at once applied. The prisoner was severely scourged, then stretched upon the rack with unusual barbarity, while lighted torches were applied to his sides. At each new infliction the Count insulted his victim with cruel mockery, and with diabolical blasphemies urged him to deny Jesus Christ.

"Unhappy man," replied the priest, "you once adored Him too, and now do you wish to drag others into your miserable apostasy? Shame!"

"I speak in the name of Augustus," said the Count. "Remember what is written in your Sacred Writings: 'The heart of the king is in the hands of God,' which proves that when he denied Christ it was by an impulse from the divinity."

"You speak falsely. The heart of the tyrant is already given into the hand of the devil."

"Whom do you call *tyrant?*"

"Whoever has sent you here to tempt me to apostasy."

"Cease your insolent foolery! I can order you to instant death."

"Well, do so as soon as it pleases you. I do not seek any favor at the price of a sin."

"Ah! You are very willing to see the end of your torments. You shall not escape so easily. You shall die by inches."

"Most senseless of mortals," said Theodoret solemnly, and his brow seemed to glow already with the brightness of his approaching crown, "you talk of death as if you were the supreme

arbiter and dispenser of it, and you seem to forget that death awaits you too. Yet a few days, and you will be stretched upon a bed of agony to die a painful and ignominious death. And moreover, your tyrant shall not conquer the Persians, as he vainly hopes; he shall not wear the laurels he now thinks soon to win, nor shall he ever again set foot on Roman soil. He shall perish by an unknown hand."

"Strike him down!" cried the terror-stricken Count, "pluck out the heart of that mad blasphemer!"

Theodoret fell beneath the weapons of the executioners; but his words did not die with him. The death of the Count verified the prediction of the martyr; one of his chief agents, a man named Felix, had preceded him by a few hours to the tomb. Every day was marked by the violent death of one or other of these apostate violators of holy things, visibly stricken by the divine vengeance. The pagans and impious men of the lower class made no secret of their terror and dismay; the heretical court feigned a stoicism which belied its real fear and trepidation. The Christians of Antioch began to look up and to hope for better days. No one any longer doubted the near fulfilment of Theodoret's prophecy, which passed from mouth to mouth, with various comments and conjectures; it was communicated by letter to friends abroad, to the exiles and prisoners, and the people as they read on the public documents the name of

the Emperor, JULIAN FELIX AUGUSTUS, would say to one another: "Count Julian is dead; Felix is dead; now it is the turn of Augustus."

Meanwhile Alexandria had also witnessed a splendid triumph of the Faith in the person of her great Patriarch, Athanasius. Tigranes, as has been already said, had eagerly accepted the mission intrusted to him by Julian. He hurried through the thirty-six stations between Antioch and Alexandria without stopping a moment longer than was absolutely necessary to change horses, snatching a few moments to sleep, or to swallow a few mouthfuls of food without leaving his chariot. His mind was occupied by two great thoughts—to find some pretext for remaining in Alexandria until the opening of the Persian campaign, thus to escape the sight of those excesses which had disgusted him at the court; and, what was still more important to him, to discover Athanasius in the concealment which had defied the thousand agents and artifices of Constantius, in order to warn him of the treacherous designs of Julian. So deeply was he absorbed in the consideration of these designs, that the striking and varied scenery through which he passed did not attract even a passing glance. He traversed the beautiful tract of country between Pelusium and Alexandria, the very garden of the fertile region lying within the Delta, thickly set with cities, towns and hamlets, a vast museum of temples, pyramids and monuments, with soft green verdure stretching over the whole landscape like

a rich carpet. It was only when he had crossed the last of the branches of the Nile, above Andropolis, that his attention was attracted to the great number of travellers who were journeying in the same direction as himself. At one of the last stages of the journey he halted for a few moments at an inn which seemed to be crowded with strangers of all classes and conditions, and seeing a group of monks resting in the shade of some palm trees, he drew near to them and saluted them courteously in Greek. No one replied. He repeated his greeting in Latin, and the monks looked at one another as if asking, "What language is he speaking?" Then one of the younger members of the party, after asking the abbot's permission by a sign, rose and said in Alexandrian Greek: "Stranger, these are monks of Upper Thebais, they do not understand the language of Egypt. What do you desire?"

"Nothing; it was a mere feeling of curiosity which led me to address you. Whither are all these monks going, whom I have seen on the road?"

"To the City."*

"For what purpose? If I may ask the question."

"To obtain the blessing of the holy Patriarch."

"What Patriarch?"

* The Egyptians styled Alexandria "the city," by excellence, just as Rome was called "*Urbs*" by the Latins, and Athens "Ἄστυ" by the Greeks.

"Have you never heard of the great Patriarch of Egypt? The great Athanasius?"

"Athanasius! He has then returned to Alexandria?"

"Not yet, but he is expected from day to day."

"God be with you, Brother," said Tigranes, taking his leave. He leaped once more into his chariot, and now more anxious than ever to reach the end of his journey, he called repeatedly to the postilions to redouble their speed; but it was all to no purpose, the imperial chariot had to thread its way through a dense throng of footmen, horsemen, cars, chariots and loaded camels, while every cross-road, lane or small path, became a new tributary, swelling the great stream of humanity which was pouring into the capital. The great Alexandrian canal, which ran along the side of the highway, was covered with boats of every size and description—there were the light and graceful pleasure-boats, with rich purple cushions and white linen curtains and awnings; heavy barges, crowded with people of the middle and lower classes, were protected from the sun by awnings of dressed leather, gayly decorated with fringes and trimmings of many gaudy colors, and here and there bands of sturdy youths, for want of better conveyance, stood on flat-boats or rafts, propelled and steered with homely oars or branches of trees. Rich and poor jostled one another on land and water; the monks reciting the psalter, young men singing joyful airs—clerics and bishops, women and chil-

dren all mixed in one indiscriminate mass, all intent on one common end, journeyed on together towards Alexandria. At Hermopolis all the monasteries and lauras of Scete and Nitria seemed to have poured out their inmates; the streets and roads fairly swarmed with their white-cowled monks. Further on, Tigranes saw the lake of Mareotis spread out on his left under the sun like a burnished mirror, while here and there its surface, just stirred by the morning breeze, looked like a glittering and sparkling sheet of fretted silver, and everywhere its bosom was alive with white sails all moving in the direction of the great metropolis.

"Great Heaven!" exclaimed Tigranes, struck with wonder and admiration; and turning to an officer, who had entered his chariot at the last stage to pay his respects to the imperial envoy, "what does all this mean?" he asked. "How can one city hold such a vast multitude of people? Where will they find food to support them, or cohorts to keep them in order?"

"The worst of all is," replied the officer, "that the stores of the city have been drained for the coming war. However, it is consoling to reflect that these people will do no harm; they are all peaceably disposed. They have come only to receive the blessing of their Patriarch, Athanasius, and then they will return quietly to their homes."

To give some idea of the immense throng gathered together on this occasion to hail the return of the holy bishop, it may suffice to say, that the

number of strangers from all parts of Egypt doubled the population of the city, which counted at least a million of inhabitants. The object of all this love and veneration, the persecuted and exiled Athanasius, entered the city by the main thoroughfare, a noble avenue measuring a hundred feet in width, stretching in length as far as the eye could reach, and flanked on both sides by lofty temples, lyceums and stately palaces, all decorated with the lavished wealth of nature and art, their porches crowded with eager spectators in holiday attire; hangings of the renowned Alexandrian tapestry floated from the windows, the rays of the sun were flashed back from the profuse array of gold and silver, the eye was dazzled by a thousand varied colors.

From the elevated position which he occupied, Tigranes could command the whole range of the broad avenue, and thus take in at a glance the varied features of this splendid triumph. The humble man of God had refused the costly chariot offered by the citizens, as well as the gift of a noble white charger, richly caparisoned; he would have nothing but an humble beast of burden, and so he entered the city, riding upon the foal of an ass, borrowed for the occasion. As he rode slowly up the densely thronged avenue, his look showing the deep recollection of his soul, his eyes were modestly fixed upon the ground, and his hands were joined upon his breast, except when he raised them to give the patriarchal benediction; he was greeted at every step with enthusiastic acclama-

tions of faith and of joy: "Long live Athanasius!" "Holy father, bless us!"—"Great is the Patriarch of the Alexandrians!"—"Hosannah to the orthodox bishop!"—"Hosannah to the victorious exile!" Old men wept with joy, mothers held up their children for his blessing, ladies threw down from the balconies rich spices and perfumes, which were burned on stands prepared in the street, filling the air with clouds of incense; rare and beautiful flowers were showered from all directions upon the returning exile's path. The whole scene was one of uncontrollable joy and exultation.

Thus was Athanasius escorted to the great basilica, where he publicly returned humble thanks to God, and spoke words of peace and concord to the clergy and the assembled faithful. During the remainder of the day Alexandria presented a continuous scene of joy—there was song, and music, and feasting everywhere, and at night there was not a dwelling that was not ablaze with festive light. The most striking feature of this great rejoicing was the part taken in it by the very heathens and heretics, who declared that now that Athanasius was restored to Alexandria, they would consider him their father too; they restored to him the churches unjustly made over to them by the state, and besought him to receive them back to his obedience. The whole city seemed to have become one household. As if the holiness of Athanasius had been poured out upon them as he passed, the Christians felt among themselves a

universal renewal of the life of piety and zeal. Young girls began to present themselves in great numbers to receive the veil as virgins consecrated to God; bands of youths came to receive the blessing of the Saint, and then went to people the still unoccupied parts of the desert, while their parents, far from hindering them, blessed their journey, and envied them their vocation; numerous and generous alms poured in for the support of the poor and the widows, and every orphan found adoptive parents; the basilicas resounded, at every hour, with psalms, and hymns, prayers, and sacred homilies, and crowds attended the celebration of the sacred offices of religion; the dwellings became temples of worship, and the holy temples were sanctified by unceasing prayer.

Athanasius seemed to multiply himself, and to be everywhere at once. He preached in all the churches, visited and comforted the communities of monks and nuns, instructed the new catechumens, who came now in unusual numbers to receive baptism, received into the bosom of the Church heretics and penitents—in a word, he brought back the faith and fervor of the first days of the Apostolic Church. And as if Alexandria alone had been a field too narrow for his great soul, his first act was to convoke a synod of his patriarchate to condemn heretical perfidy, to restore the prelates who had fallen through weakness, and give back peace and union to the churches of the East.

Meanwhile Tigranes had not forgotten his chief design in coming to Alexandria. Though the Prefect of Egypt, a pliant tool of Julian's, was absent from the city just then, still he might return at any moment, and play some treacherous game against the life of the Patriarch. Accordingly, on the very evening of his arrival he communicated his design to Didymus, a man of high official rank, and a fervent Christian, whose hospitality he had accepted during his stay in Alexandria. Through the influence of this friend he easily obtained an audience of the holy Patriarch on the following day, made him acquainted with the plots formed at the Court of Julian, and begged him to place himself in safety before the return of the Prefect to the city. Athanasius replied that he had no fear, that more angels would help him in his need than Augustus could summon demons to assist him in his wicked machinations. The faith and confidence of Athanasius were once more rewarded by the divine protection, and not all the schemes of the Apostate, seconded by the active hatred of the Prefect of Egypt, were able again to deprive Alexandria of the great Patriarch Athanasius.

XXIII.

SATANIC HATE.

NOT many years ago, the hand of God fell heavily upon one who had been a moving spirit in that persecution against the Church of God and His Vicar upon earth, of which we have been and still are witnesses; and as he lay upon the bed of death he still uttered the celebrated aphorism, "A free Church in a free State." What may have been the value of that maxim and the sincerity of him who uttered it, at such a moment, is not a matter of inquiry for us; it lies in the hidden judgments of God. What it was worth during his lifetime, and what its significance in the minds of his colleagues and successors, time and facts have unmistakably shown. It is nothing better than a shameless fraud, an empty name, a mere repetition of the maxim so frequently and ostentatiously proclaimed by Julian the Apostate: "Freedom for all, Greeks—that is, worshippers of idols—and Galileans—which meant Christians"—a principle which that unscrupulous tyrant took particular pains to assert at the very time when he was persecuting, with fire and sword and with all

the resources of the most refined cruelty, the faithful servants of Jesus Christ. Julian was wholly possessed by a bitter and malign hatred for Jesus Christ, the Son of God; that satanic hate has been the perpetual heirloom and the mark of all the later apostates who have adopted and carried out his policy; it is unquestionably the moving principle of the present persecution against God and His Church. On what other supposition can we account for the wondrous consistency of those who raise one hand to swear sincere devotion to the Church, while with the other they subsidize and crown the writer of an infamous romance against the divinity of the Incarnate Word? How else shall we reconcile the fair speeches and professions made to the prelates of the Church and to its Supreme Pontiff, by the very men who esteem no honor too great for the heart of a vile blasphemer of the Son of God? How else can we explain the expression of great respect and loyalty towards the Church, inserted in the first article of a National Constitution, while its framers openly allow the most Holy Name of Jesus Christ to be publicly outraged in the capital of the Christian world, and under the very eyes of Christ's Vicar upon earth. What measure of honesty or sincerity can we accord to the guarantees which have been so ostentatiously paraded before the eyes of the world, promising that full liberty shall be secured to the Church for the free administration of her internal government and the integrity of her

prerogatives, while she is fettered and trammelled at every step by the obligation of military service enforced on her ecclesiastical students, by the suppression of religious Orders, by a hundred other vexatious enactments to which the Spouse of Christ is daily subjected? No! the explanation of such glaring inconsistency, of such odious hypocrisy, is not to be sought in the specious pretext of National Unity, of the establishment of one or another form of government, in the interests of human progress—but in the fixed purpose of waging a deadly war against Jesus Christ, a purpose instigated by a satanic hatred of His holy law and of His divine Person. Not the establishment of liberty, but of pagan license, is the object of the leaders of the present movement against the Church, so faithfully seconded by the Secret Societies and by the Governments which they have entangled in their infernal nets.

But to return to Julian.

As the time drew near for the opening of the Persian war, the Apostate used every endeavor to propitiate the heathen divinities by fresh acts of cruelty against the Christians and by new outrages against the Person of the Incarnate Word. Of all the duties imposed by the Son of God upon His Church, none perhaps is dearer to His divine Heart than the careful training of Christian youth. "Suffer the little children to come unto me," is His own divine injunction. Certain it is that the Church has in nothing displayed greater love and solici-

tude, than in the intellectual and spiritual culture of the younglings of the fold. But Julian had cast a hungry eye upon this chosen portion of the flock, just as his later imitators have always shown and do still show a special appetite for the same prey.

On one and the same morning, in Antioch, in Alexandria, in Constantinople, in Athens and in Rome, the attention of the people was attracted by the appearance of an imperial edict posted up in the usual public places. They crowded to the spot to learn the new orders of the Emperor.

"What is the news?" asked one of another.

"That the Christians shall no longer be allowed to teach unless they deny their faith."

"And why?" was the natural inquiry.

"Why? It is very plain. Because we are entering upon an age of true freedom."

"What a reason!"

"Impossible!"

"Then read for yourself."

And each one might indeed read for himself:

"Julian Pious Felix Augustus, &c., &c. Whosoever holds a certain opinion and teaches the reverse to his pupils, is guilty of treason both against science and honesty. Now, they who profess to teach any science must, first of all, be honest men, that is to say, they must not, hypocritically, hold any sentiments or opinions contrary to those of the whole people; this is especially true of those whose office it is to teach the young and to explain the ancient authors, whether in the schools

of grammar, of rhetoric, or of philosophy. The professors of the latter science in particular, are too often ambitious not only to teach the graces of style and diction, but even to discuss manners and morals, and to set up as masters of political economy. Whether such claims are tenable or not, we shall not now undertake to decide; we are disposed to commend those who advocate teachings so important, we would even bestow upon them the highest praise, did they not stultify themselves by teaching doctrines very different from those which they really hold. Did not Homer, Hesiod, Demosthenes, Thucydides, Isocrates, and Lycias draw all their inspirations from the gods? Did they not always hold that they were under the special patronage and protection of Mercury and of the Muses? It is, therefore, manifestly inconsistent that they who explain these great writers should dishonor the gods whom they honored. And yet, though we deem such a course very absurd in itself, we shall not oblige them to change their views or their manner of teaching. We shall only offer them the choice either to resign their position as teachers of the classical writings which they consider pernicious, or, if they still prefer to hold their chairs, to begin by recanting at once, and for the future to teach their hearers that Homer, Hesiod, and the other writers mentioned, are not impious, foolish and superstitious, in point of religion, as they have hitherto asserted. If such teachers continue to hold their

lucrative positions, teaching doctrines which in their hearts they repudiate, it is clear that they can do so only from the basest love of gain.

"Under the preceding administrations, many might well have been deterred by the fear of penalties or losses from appearing in the temples and showing their fidelity to the true doctrine concerning the gods; but now that the gods have given us freedom, there does not seem to be any further reason why any one should teach what he holds to be false and pernicious. Therefore, if such persons believe that the authors they have undertaken to explain were truly wise men, let them first of all imitate the piety of those writers towards the gods; but if they consider them to have been foolish and vainly superstitious in worshipping the most holy gods, let them lay aside those authors and go to their churches to expound Luke and Matthew, who will teach them to fly from our shrines. As for me, I desire that your ears and your tongues be rebaptized (as you would say) in the Grecian doctrines. Let this henceforth be held as a universal law, binding all teachers and instructors.

"Students shall be free to hear what teachers they choose; for it would be a crying injustice that youths without any experience to guide and protect them, should be dragged out of the right path and forced to adopt the belief of their parents. We might, in justice, use force to bring these parents themselves to a right understanding, as

madmen are forcibly seized and confined for treatment; but it seems good to us to leave every one free to play the fool as he pleases. Such ignorance needs to be cured in the school, not in the prison."

This proclamation fell upon the Christians like a thunderbolt. "Then we must either cease to teach, or apostatize," they cried.

"What!" exclaimed the Christian parent, "shall I no longer be able to have a Christian teacher for my son? So I must bring him up either a dunce or an idolater!"

Said another: "If my boy takes it into his head to go to hear one of those blasphemers, I must quietly let him be ruined! I am no longer his father! What a refinement of cruelty! To attack us even in the sanctuary of the family circle, and poison the child in the very arms of the parent!"

"Yes!" added a third, "and meanwhile impiety lords it over us, reigns in the university chairs, and we must be silent or deny the faith!"

"And worst of all," interposed another, "this odious tyranny is crushing us in the name of liberty. Had the tyrant openly proclaimed his purpose of oppressing the Christians and persecuting the Church, it would have been at least honest. But no; he persecutes in the name of liberty—'The gods have given us liberty!'—therefore we shall gag every one who refuses to sing the praises of the gods!"

"And that sensible injunction," added another,

"to think with the nation! But who or what is the nation? Is it not you and I, and all of us? We Christians are, in the nation, ten to one; but that signifies nothing; he and his satellites are devil worshippers, therefore the nation must worship the devil, and any one who refuses to fall down and adore, is forthwith branded as a dangerous citizen, unfit to teach the young."

"It is false!—Hypocrite!—Apostate!—Tyrant!" were the cries now heard in all directions.

Even the pagans, when they met in private, confessed themselves ashamed of their master's unwarrantable proceeding, and expressed their anxiety lest the honor of Julian might suffer serious damage if it should be recorded in history that the restorer of their worship, amid all his professions of securing universal freedom, had unscrupulously trampled upon the most sacred rights of the family. More bold and outspoken was the protest of the Christian philosophers, who knew better, because they felt more deeply the deadly effects that must result from such a blow. The two illustrious friends, Basil and Gregory, found no words to express the anguish and indignation which overwhelmed their souls when the tidings of this proclamation came to them in their distant retreat. The voice of their indignant sorrow was soon heard abroad. "Do they dare, then," cried the great-hearted Basil, "to say that we shall not give a Christian education to the sons of Christians! No, it shall not be! We shall

teach letters to those who seek our teaching. Science and letters, poetry and eloquence, are a gift of God, not a boon of the Emperor! Even the æsthetic beauties of pagan writers are ours, and not his, as he repeats every day. They are ours, because they are of God, and not all his satellites will ever succeed in wresting that treasure from our grasp. It is the height of folly to confound the literary study of pagan authors with the study of pagan theology. As if we could not relish a beautiful passage in Homer without consequently burning incense to Jupiter! It is a blunder in logic, disgraceful, if you will, in an imperial diplomatist, puerile, ridiculous; but with the uneducated it will tell. I know that some simple priests have well nigh been taken in by the trick, and were perhaps ready to thank Augustus for taking from us the pernicious writings of the ancients, and limiting us to the ascetic style of the Bible and of Christian books of devotion. These good men would thus too well second the treacherous measures of Julian the Apostate, in the belief that they are doing good service to the Church of Jesus Christ."

"It is well for us," cried Gregory, "that these good souls are not bishops; they would give us priests well supplied, indeed, with beautiful lessons from the Sacred Volume, but hopelessly incompetent to make them practically useful. These simple-minded men do not seem to understand that a polished and powerful diction is one of our

most effective weapons in fighting the battles of the Lord; now in the writings of the ancients we find a pure, powerful and luminous style; in the ancients, we find true eloquence. Not without good reason, truly, does Julian strive to wrest this weapon from us, and with equally good reason does this decree wring from the whole Church a cry of bitter anguish.

"To say nothing of the obvious fact that not every word of the ancients is a blasphemy against Christ our Lord, I feel that I may claim to have found many literary and intellectual treasures in their writings; and this I do not hesitate to declare to young students. Where would be our schools of oratory had we never studied the eloquence of that Demosthenes, of that Æschines, whom Julian would snatch from our grasp? Away, then, with such sophistry! This threatening storm will soon pass over, and it will be found to have been a vain attempt. It behooves us now to send up our sighs and prayers to God. Yes, to sigh, indeed, but likewise to do battle manfully," continued the intrepid bishop. "Already, faithless apostate, have you won titles enough to the hatred of the whole human race; but now the measure is full. You are bringing upon yourself now the indignation of all who love the splendor of sacred literature; and I am proud to say that I reckon myself among them. I have cast away from me rank and wealth, glory and power, and all the empty dreams of worldlings; and I have never regretted the step.

But the charms and the wealth of literature I still cling to, and these treasures alone, after those of heaven, I love and cherish. They are my joy; and I do not lament the care and the toil, and the journeyings by sea and land, through which I have labored to acquire them. And now, at what result do you hope to arrive by this senseless and brutal decree? Do you intend to show that all the learning of the Greeks belongs to you, because, forsooth, the heathens praised their gods in Greek? On this principle you have an exclusive claim to all the arts; the old painters gave a new life in their works to the Grecian fables; their sculptors fashioned idols, and their architects reared temples for them. So, then, we have no claim to any of the fine arts; we are hopelessly shut out from the pale of civilization!"

"But, after all, why all this fear and apprehension?" asked Basil. "Such extreme measures are always self-destroying!"

"I have no apprehension about the final result," answered Gregory. "But I must protest to the end against the iniquitous decree. We shall, at least, show him that we have enough eloquence left to blast injustice even on the throne. I shall denounce him fearlessly, and may the voice of my indignation be a pleasing sacrifice to the outraged majesty of the word of God!"

"But who will give ear to your words in these days of injustice and oppression?"

"I care not; I must speak. I cannot longer stifle

the voice of outraged justice. It will not be shut up in my breast, but it struggles to break forth, and to cry out in Christian homes, in the highways, and the temples."

"And what do you hope to do then?"

"Do? Let us join hands, and together we will build him a monument which shall dwarf the pillars of Hercules; but it shall be a monument of infamy, a monument of deathless shame—not rooted to the soil, here in our unknown retreat, but a living, a moving thing, which shall go out among the nations of the world, and stand up in the sight of coming generations, forever, to proclaim the disgrace of the enemy of Jesus Christ!"*

And these two holy friends did rear that monument to the eternal infamy of Julian. The Dis-

* Socrates, in his Church History, Vol. III. 16, p. 420, mentions these objections brought against the teachings of the classics in Christian schools, on the occasion of this edict of Julian's. It is worth while to note here that the modern assailants of the classics can lay no claim to the merit of originality. They should read the refutations of those objections in the writings, not only of Socrates, but also of St. Amphilochius, SS. Jerome, Augustin, Basil, and Gregory Nazianzen. It was impossible for us to quote all these writers at length, but we may state that what we do give from SS. Basil and Gregory, on the study of the Pagan classics, will be found, sometimes in the same words, always in substance, in their extant works. We may refer the reader to St. Basil's *Treatise on the Study of Profane Authors*, and the two Discourses against Julian, which are reckoned among the writings of St. Gregory Nazianzen, though it seems probable that they were the joint work of those two incomparable friends.

courses of Gregory, which their illustrious author fitly styled pillars, still live, and will continue to live as long as zeal for religious truth and abhorrence for unscrupulous persecution find a home in the hearts of men. Yet, while the courses of this noble structure were rising slowly and silently, in the desert shades of Ibora, the despotic decree of the crafty persecutor was working in the Roman world; and amid the grief and indignation of their devoted hearers, the most illustrious professors bade farewell to the schools. So Apollinaris took leave of his chair at Laodicea; and so in Athens, did Proeresius, who had been hailed as the king of oratory; so at Rome was hushed the eloquent voice of the illustrious Victorinus, and, in a hundred other schools, the voices of the great Christian teachers were silenced for a time.

Tigranes could see with his own eyes the mourning thus brought upon the flourishing schools of Alexandria; he heard the cries of grief which came from Greece and Italy, and he wept over the misfortune of Victorinus, who had been his fellow-catechumen in Rome. Greater even was his indignation at the blow which fell upon Proeresius, who had been the admired and beloved teacher of himself and of Julian, in Athens. But the Emperor, having rebelled against his God, was deaf to the voice alike of justice and of gratitude; his only purpose now was to rivet closer, day by day, the chains in which he flattered himself that he had already bound the Church of Christ; he looked

forward eagerly to the close of the Persian campaign, when he hoped to give the death-blow to that Church, the object of his undying hate. The leaders of the Pagan sects were ever at his side, watchful and active, to seize every new occasion; they were always ready with favorable signs from the gods, with omens of success for the war, to which their divinities had already promised a brilliant completion; they already exulted with malignant joy as they looked forward to the time when Augustus, returning in triumph, should throw off the mask of toleration, and openly wield the sword of persecution.

The imperial apostate had persecuted the faithful, plundered their churches, hunted their pastors to the death, and handed over the Christian youth to the corrupting influences of pagan teaching; but yet it seemed to him that he had not done enough to win the support of the gods in his proposed expedition; he would give one more proof to the world of his hatred for the God-Man. He was persuaded that if he could bring together in Jerusalem the scattered remnants of the deicide nation, stir up to new life their hatred against the God of the Christians, and thus establish a powerful centre of sworn foes to the Christian name, he would have made a great strategic move, and that the treasures of the empire would be well bestowed in carrying out such a plan, even on the eve of a great campaign. The difficulty did indeed present itself to his mind that the Jews were not worship-

pers of his gods. "No matter," thought he, "they hate Jesus Christ, and that is all that I need. I shall be satisfied if I can but conquer the Galilean on Calvary and heap disgrace upon his sepulchre. He has said that the Jewish temple shall never be rebuilt; that not a stone shall be left upon a stone. I, Julian, shall once more set the stones of that temple one upon another, and I shall write upon its front, 'Thus Julian gives the lie to the Galilean.'" And a smile of satanic malignity passed over his countenance as he contemplated in fancy the realization of his blasphemous boast.

This purpose had now taken so firm a hold upon Julian that he could not rest until he should see it in a fair way of completion; accordingly for some time the military preparations, which had been pushed on with so much activity, were made to give place to the more important work of the discomfiture of Christ; secretaries were kept busy dispatching letters to all the leading men of the Jewish nation, urging them to spread in all directions among their people the pious design of Augustus, to rouse them to a sense of the greatness of the enterprise, to raise means for carrying it out, to come and possess once more their dispeopled country, which was opening its arms to receive them. For three centuries no kindly voice had sounded in the ears of these unhappy wanderers, save that of the Church of Christ, which they would not hear; and they could hardly believe their eyes when they read the letters of the Roman

Emperor, filled with words of pity, of affection, and even of praise. "Augustus," they said, "calls us Brothers; he bids us raise again the walls of Sion and restore the ruined temple! Long live our second Cyrus! Where is the second Zorobabel to lead forth rescued Israel from bondage?" Some of the more cautious and observant of those who were favored with the imperial notice, did indeed detect the hidden aims of the apostate, and knew that in their nation he loved only the crucifiers of Christ; none the less, however, they took an active part in the great movement which was now bearing on the hopeful children of Israel towards Jerusalem, and joined in the loud threats of coming vengeance which now assailed the Christians wherever the bands of Jewish pilgrims passed.

From the four winds of heaven they came to the land of their fathers. From Phœnicia, from Egypt, from the depths of Asia and from distant Spain they crowded into the ports of Joppa, of Ascalon and Gaza, bringing with them all their worldly substance; they poured in through the gates of the Holy City, day and night, families, tribes, nations, without number. And when their eyes beheld once more the long-desired land of the their fathers, they burst into tears of joy, they threw themselves upon the ground and kissed it with reverence, they covered their heads with the dust of its consecrated streets, and rose up wild with frantic zeal and enthusiasm. The walls of the city were too narrow to hold the multitudes

which choked its gates; the neighboring hills were white with the tents of the hopeful but misguided people. The valleys of Gehenna and Jehoshaphat were repeopled; their encampments stretched along the banks of Cedron to the Mount of Scandal, and some of the more ardent even dared to raise their tents upon the slopes of Golgotha, on the very height where that awful deed was done which brought the everlasting curse upon their guilty race.

The consternation of the Christians was in sad contrast with the confident exultation of the Jews; but they were comforted and strengthened by Cyril, the holy bishop of Jerusalem, who foretold that the whole undertaking would result in the discomfiture of its author. "Let them tear down," said the saintly prelate, "it is fitting that the fulfilment of the divine prophecies should be brought about by the very hands of God's enemies. There are still some broken pillars standing; some stones still hold together; and now the Lord has sent them blindfolded here to tear down, to break asunder everything and to grind to powder the last fragments of the doomed fabric. I bless the hands that work out the ends of the Almighty." The prophecy was soon verified. The most encouraging success waited on every movement of the misguided workers so long as they continued to tear down, to level and destroy; but no sooner did they set about laying new foundations and raising the courses of the intended trophy, than

heaven and earth seemed to league their powers to blast the unholy hopes of human folly. The winds of heaven scattered and bore away the materials which had been piled in great heaps upon the ground; torrents of water burst forth from the bowels of the earth and filled the deep pits which had been dug to receive the new foundations. With the obstinate energy of desperation the workmen returned to their task and dug deeper and broader; then a mysterious fire broke out from the depths of the excavations, accompanied by deep rumblings and thundering reports which terrified the boldest; their tools fell from their hands and their souls were filled with an irresistible dread. They strove to fly before these fearful warnings of the wrath of God, but in vain; balls of fire broke forth from the earth, quickly overtook their flying victims and wrapped them in flames. But few of them escaped. It was pitiful to see the terror-stricken people rushing to the scene of destruction, casting themselves upon the earth with cries and tears, calling upon heaven to spare them, and hoping for better success on the morrow. The more hardened among them, after waiting a few days till the first impressions produced by such a scene had grown weaker, banded together, swore to carry out their purpose or to die in the attempt, and again set to work. But they had hardly taken up their tools when a fearful rumbling was heard under their feet, and in an instant devouring flames had consumed the

workmen and their implements. Still so desperate was their blindness and obstinacy, that they would not even yet desist. But at last men were no longer found to brave the manifest anger of heaven, and they were forced to give over. And now, day and night, a dark cloud hovered over the accursed spot, continual quakings of the earth forbade all approach, and flames of fire streaming upward unceasingly, cast a lurid glare upon the scene, especially when their baleful light was shed upon the darkness of the night. From time to time tufts of fire, as from unseen torches, suddenly rose from the earth or seemed to form in mid-air, and, as if borne by some invisible hand, wandered through the streets of the city, hovered over the dwellings, and everywhere left imprinted the sign of the cross, to the confusion of the enemies of the holy symbol.

In spite of all these multiplied and mysterious warnings, that stiff-necked people for several months persevered in the hope of conquering or appeasing the wrath of heaven; but at last they were forced to acknowledge that the attempt could not prosper, and that their obstinacy could but prove fatal to those who persisted. Already had countless treasure, public and private, been sunk in the work, many lives sacrificed, and yet not a stone had been set upon a stone. Excessive boldness gave way to despondency, which soon grew into desperate and general consternation. The terrified and dis-

comfited Jews were soon flying from the city in all directions.

The director of the works thus abruptly broken off, was Alipius, a famous architect of Antioch, and in great favor with Julian; accordingly it was thought best that he should bear to the Emperor the tidings of their ignominious failure. More impious even than the very Jews, the Apostate shut his eyes to the light thus offered to him once more; he would not yield; he managed even to hide whatever emotion the announcement might have awakened in his soul. With blasphemous oaths, he swore to resume the undertaking on his return from the war in Persia. It was his highest ambition to enter in triumph the native land of Jesus Christ, there, over the Sacred Sepulchre, to make a league with the crucifiers of the Redeemer, and thence to carry on his great war to the death against the Christian world. But he could not stifle the voice of many-tongued rumor which had already carried to the four corners of the empire the report of what had happened in Jerusalem; and whilst the Emperor was on his march towards the boundaries of Persia, the ill-starred children of Israel who had escaped the fate of their fellow-countrymen, were hurrying back dismayed into the various cities from which they had gone out so full of sanguine hope and jubilant expectation. Everywhere they bore the tale of their defeat in the expression of hopeless despair and deep shame which had settled upon their countenances; every-

where their cries of grief and mourning were heard over their lost treasures, their doomed relatives and friends who had fallen in the mad undertaking; and loud were the curses they heaped upon the Emperor, whom they charged with all their woes. Some, indeed, did but harden their hearts the more in the rage of disappointment, while others gave themselves up to the worship of idols, fancying that thus they would best revenge themselves for the abandonment to which they seemed to be consigned by the Jehovah of their fathers. Many, however, were awakened to a better sense, and threw themselves at the feet of the bishops, acknowledging their errors, and asking for the baptism of Him whom their nation had crucified, but who had just given such tremendous proofs that He was still living and reigning with resistless might.

Such were the deeds with which Julian preluded the Persian campaign, undertaken with bright hopes of a speedy triumph soon to be followed by the execution of his cherished purpose—the utter annihilation of Christianity. And it was his design to effect this purpose, not by means of the worn-out lies and hypocritical professions of which he had made such frequent use before, but openly and mercilessly. But God had decreed otherwise.

XXIV.

"THOU HAST CONQUERED, GALILEAN!"

JULIAN entered upon the Persian campaign with the most sanguine hopes of success. The finest fleet the all-conquering Roman Empire had ever fitted out, was sailing up the Tigris, well manned and abundantly furnished with all the necessaries of war, commanded by brave and skilful officers, and at the most favorable season. But the chief ground of his hope was the positive assurance of a coming triumph received from the oracles of the gods; and to insure a continuance of their good-will and protection, Julian continued regularly to celebrate their rites during the whole time of his march. Indeed the tribunes and veteran officers were far less often consulted about the disposition and movements of the army than the magicians, soothsayers and sacrificers by whom he was always surrounded. This very practice of consulting and worshipping the demons was the trap in which the Apostate was to be caught. Several Persian refugees who had come to the camp of Julian, began to suggest that the fleet would be rather a hinderance than a help to the

army; Julian at once summoned his magicians and philosophers to advise him in the matter. They found that the opinion was very correct, and that the gods would have the fleet destroyed by fire, which was accordingly done, much to the discouragement of the legions and against the loud protests of the oldest officers, who made no secret of their indignation at this exhibition of superstitious folly. Sapor, having by this trick secured the destruction of the Roman fleet, managed next, by a series of feigned attacks and retreats, to draw their army into the heart of Persia, to the very gates of Ctesiphon. Julian considered each step thus made by the invading army as a real victory, and his dispatches bore to the cities of the empire tidings of the most glorious success. Alexandria, Antioch, and the other great cities would once have rejoiced to hear such news from one of their armies on foreign soil, but now it brought them terror and anxious apprehension rather. Such was the state of things until the morning of the twenty-third of June, when Julian awoke to find himself in the presence of a large force of Persian troops, provided with a great number of scythed chariots and protected by many towers filled with archers and drawn by oxen or borne upon the backs of huge elephants.

One of the officers of Jovian, Julian's successor, thus described the engagement:

"The Persians rushed forward, according to their custom, yelling furiously, and brandishing

their scimetars high over their heads. The earth shook beneath the tread of their solid phalanx as they advanced upon us, but we did not fear. Against their fiery charge our ranks stood firm, presenting an unbroken hedge of pikes and spear-points to the advancing foe; and as they fearlessly rushed upon the bristling line, we did our best to press home our weapons through the links and scales of their armor. We knew that it would have been all up with us had they succeeded in breaking our line at any point, for then they would have cut their way into the heart of our army, and thrown us into irremediable confusion. But the very danger made us all the bolder, and when, at last, the trumpet sounded the charge, we leaped forward with wild enthusiasm over the wall of dead and dying that lay along our line, and rushed madly into the enemy's ranks, foot and horse in one confused mass. We had the advantage of being lighter than our foes; when once they had been borne down, their heavy armor hindered them from rising in time to save themselves from the stroke of death. After a short and sharp encounter they began to give way, but we were held back from following them up by our tribunes, who saw that we should have enough to do to defend our comparatively small army against the numerous bodies of cavalry hovering about our flanks, ready to take advantage of the first break and to charge us at a disadvantage.

"This force repulsed, we had hardly time to

take breath when we were called to meet another attack. The main body of the Persian army was still untouched, and now, on the ground from which the broken lines of infantry had just been driven, appeared a new and more formidable enemy. A long line of huge elephants was moving up to the charge, accompanied and supported by those wheeled towers, more than fifteen feet high, and manned by bowmen well supplied with arrows. The elephants too, carried little towers on their backs, and these were likewise filled with picked archers. But worse than the archers and their darts was the mere sight of the elephants themselves, for it is one which always strikes terror into our horses. Down upon us came the huge beasts, wild with the excitement of the scene and the strong wine which had been given to them before the battle, beating the air with their trunks and uttering loud cries, more fatal to us than even the blows of their trunks; for although our horses were evidently terrified at the sight of these monsters, as they showed by their flashing eyes and distended nostrils, champing their bits and pawing the ground nervously, still, they were under the control of their riders; but when they heard the horrid bellowing, they reared and plunged in uncontrollable terror, threw their riders, or bore them away in helpless panic, breaking our line and throwing everything into confusion wherever they passed.

"Julian was a good soldier, it must be acknow-

ledged; his eye took in the whole scene, and he saw, at a glance, the danger of imminent defeat which threatened his army. He at once ordered all the mounted men and officers in the rear, whose horses had not yet become unmanageable, to dismount; then, surrounded by a slight body-guard, he took his station on foot in the first ranks. We were desperate now, and men of all arms pressed close together, determined to meet the charge without flinching. Meanwhile, our engines of war had been plied against the elephants and the towers, as if against the walls of a besieged town; catapults and ballistas were not idle, but the most effective work was done when we came to close quarters; then we cut the harness of the oxen that drew the towers, though even when the oxen were killed or unharnessed and the towers stopped in their course, they still defied our assaults, and rained on us a shower of darts and arrows. One great object with us was to bring down the elephants; we attacked them with the points of our swords and spears, avoiding, by great activity, the strokes of their trunks; some contrived to run a weapon into their bowels, or their eyes, or to cut the tendons of their legs; in this way many were brought down, and the archers on their backs were received on the points of the same weapons which had caused their fall. Some of the poor brutes, maddened by the wounds they were receiving from all sides, seized their own drivers and hurled them into our ranks; many became utterly unman-

ageable and fled from the field, breaking through and crushing down the ranks of the Persians. Our men, seeing that the tide of battle was setting against the enemy, pushed their advantage with renewed energy, and the Persians, better fitted by nature for an impetuous charge than for endurance at close quarters, began to give way on all sides. The disorder of the main body threw their wings, consisting of cavalry and scythed chariots, into a panic, and instead of closing in on our flanks, as they might have done, they joined in the general flight.

"Amid the wavering fortunes of the fight, Julian had skilfully guided all the movements of his army in person, though, having rushed upon the field in the hurry of the first attack, he was without any armor. When he saw the whole Persian force in full retreat, he ordered his cavalry to mount their horses once more, and quickly to charge the flying foe. In a moment he was in the saddle, followed by the eager squadrons. In vain did Sallust, Anatolius, our present Emperor Jovian, and all the officers entreat him to wait until his breast-plate could be brought, or at least to let his body-guard surround him; he would not hear them, but spurred on amid the foremost of the pursuers. It seemed as if the wrath of God was hurrying him on to his doom. All of us who belonged to the Pretorian Guard followed close to his person. We swept like a tempest over the field, Julian leaning forward over his horse's mane, and waving his sword to urge us on. Suddenly we saw him

throw up his arms and fall backward from his steed; mindless of the enemy now, and of the excitement which had possessed us, we sprang from our horses, and gathered around our fallen chief. He was lying on his back, writhing with pain, and striving to draw out the point of a dart which had snapped off close to the head. But the weapon was too deeply fixed in his side; then looking for a moment at the stream of warm blood as it flowed upon the ground, he gave way to a paroxysm of rage in the very face of death, and filling the hollow of his hand with his own blood, he threw it up towards heaven, with the bitter cry: 'Thou hast conquered, Galilean; O, Sun, thou hast betrayed me!' Then for a moment he gasped for breath, his eyes became fixed and glassy, and he lay in our arms a lifeless corpse."

Though in the days of Julian there were neither railways nor electric telegraphs, yet the tidings of his death flew from one end of the empire to the other with the speed of lightning. It seemed almost as if mysterious voices in the air spread abroad the news with a swiftness beyond that of any human agent; or as if the angel of death, when he had struck down the persecutor, straightway had winged his flight across the earth to tell the persecuted that they were free. However it may be accounted for, certain it is that before any messenger came from the East, vague rumors of Julian's wretched fate were already abroad; some were telling of dark dreams which seemed to bode

evil to the Emperor's life, others were relating the prophecies of martyrs, from which they inferred that swift vengeance from Heaven was to overtake the persecutor at this time. In Alexandria, the aged Didymus, who was reckoned the deepest philosopher of the famous Christian schools of that city, was wearing himself out by fasting and weeping over the evils which had fallen upon the Church of Christ. One day it was remarked that he seemed even more weighed down by grief than usual; he refused all nourishment, and towards evening, on retiring to pray, he was overcome by sleep. Suddenly, about eight o'clock, he sprang up from his knees and cried aloud: "Praise be to God, and joy to men! We may now cease our fasting, and sing to the Lord!"

"What is the matter; what has happened?" asked one of his disciples.

"Tell Athanasius," replied the old man, "that the man of sin has perished."

But Athanasius was already informed of the event; for, in the desert, to which he had retired during the days of persecution, he already knew that the same vision had been granted at the same time to several holy hermits. In Syria the holy solitary Sabbas had long been plunged in the deepest grief, and his disciples who had for some days observed that he neither ate, nor spoke, nor gave any token of being alive to any human wants, were astonished one morning to find him cheerful and smiling.

"Father Abbot," said a simple old Monk, "why are you so joyful? The Church is in mourning, and you are rejoicing."

"Brother," replied the holy old man, "the wild boar that wasted the vineyard of the Lord has been wounded to death."

These words were borne from cell to cell through the whole district, and sighs and tears gave place to songs of praise.

In Cappadocia it was currently reported among the people that the great Basil of Cesarea had seen, in a vision, the Martyr, Mercury, the patron of the province, smiting Julian in the side. As is usual in such cases, the vision was related with the most minute and marvellous details. It was said that while Basil was praying in the basilica of Cesarea, where he had spent the night in tears, suddenly he saw the heavens opened and Christ the Lord sitting enthroned amid the Saints to judge the world. The Saints presented many accusations against the Emperor; they complained of the wounds he had already inflicted on the Bride of the Lamb, and alleged that he had already appointed a day on which he should exterminate the just and overthrow the kingdom of God upon earth. The divine Judge was filled with wrath and indignation, and sentenced the guilty Emperor to immediate death. "Whom shall I send," He asked, "to execute the sentence?" Our great Martyr, Mercury, who was standing before the Lord, clad in flaming armor, stood forth and said: "Here I

am, Lord." And the Lord said to him: "Go, and strike." Mercury brandished his glittering lance and disappeared. In a moment he returned and stood before the face of the Lord and said: "Lord, it is done."

Those who related this vision asserted that Basil had himself made it known to the clergy who were then assembling to sing the Divine Office, but with the strictest injunction to secrecy; and that they all held it to be true. Whatever may be thought of the vision, we know that as soon as the tidings of Julian's death reached him, Basil went to seek his friend Gregory, and together they prepared the last pages of the famous Discourses which had no sooner been sent forth from the solitude in which they had been written, than they were transcribed by a thousand hands and published throughout all the Churches of the East.

"Mine, mine, let it be," cried Gregory, "to carve the epitaph on this monument!"

"Dictate," replied Basil, "and I will write."

And to Gregory's dictation Basil wrote:

"Behold, O Julian, the work of those whom you reviled and trod under foot; this monument we leave you, we 'the adorers of the Crucified;' we whom you styled 'the disciples of rude fishermen,' we who 'sing psalms amid the assemblages of old women, emaciated and broken down by fasts,' we who 'spend our nights in foolish vigils;' and yet with all that we have been strong enough to overcome you. Let your Grammarians and Rhetori-

cians come forward now! Whither have your crafty counsellors gone to hide their shame? What have your sacrifices, and initiations, and mysteries availed you? What return have you had for your victims offered up with public and with secret rites? Wherein have you been benefited by the omens and auguries of which you boasted so loudly? How is it now with that 'Babylon,' nay, with the whole world, which you so fondly hoped, by means of your bloody offerings, to destroy forever? Where are the gods who were your guides and guardians on the field of battle? Do you remember now the oracles against the Christians, and the fearful threats, and the day appointed to blot out the Christian name from the face of the earth? Your great designs have vanished in smoke, and your impious boasts have been realized only in your dreams.

"We had indeed neither weapons, nor wall, nor bulwarks, nor armed legions; we had naught but our firm hope in the God who 'swore against the pride of Jacob.*' And because we were unwarlike and unarmed, you had promised (will future generations believe it?) to offer us as victims on the altars of your demons; and the great heritage of the Lord, 'the holy people and the royal priesthood,' was destined as an acceptable offering to the Evil One, as the price and the palm of your hoped-for triumph. Was this the return you

* Amos, viii. 7.

would make to the Christians who, at their own great risk and peril, had saved your young life?* Was this your act of homage to the Lord your God? And then we turned to God with prayers and tears and mournful supplications; and we cried unto Him: 'O, God, why hast Thou cast us off unto the end? Why is Thy wrath enkindled against the sheep of Thy pasture? Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast possessed from the beginning. * * * Lift up Thy hands against their pride unto the end; see what things the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary. And they that hate Thee have made their boasts in the midst of Thy solemnity.'† Then we called upon the sword of the enemy and upon the plagues of Egypt to save us; and we bowed down before our God and besought Him to rise up and smite the workers of iniquity: 'How long shall sinners, O Lord, how long shall sinners glory? * * * Thy people, O Lord, they have brought low, and they have afflicted Thy inheritance. Shall they utter and speak iniquity: shall all speak who work injustice? * * * Thou hast made us to be a contradiction to our neighbors, and our enemies have

* St. Gregory alluded to certain bishops and priests who had, by their united efforts, saved Julian from the bloody proscription of the family of Constantine. It was even said that one of these benefactors of the future Apostate, was Mark of Arethusa, whom Julian left to perish, in his old age, amid the most cruel torments.

† Ps. lxxiii. 1, 2.

scoffed at us. * * * Thou hast made us outcasts and refuse in the midst of the people.'*

"We reminded Him of His chosen vineyard which he had sanctified to Himself, and cultivated and hedged in, whereof the hedge was now broken down, so that all they who pass by the way, that is, false-hearted rulers, do pluck it, and the boar out of the wood hath laid it waste, who loved the mire of his own malice and wallowed in it with delight. Thus we cried unto the Lord in those days of darkness and tribulation. How changed is our voice to-day! Now I weep over the ruin of the impious persecutor, and now I say of him: 'How are they brought to desolation! They have suddenly ceased to be; they have perished by reason of their iniquity. * * * As the morning cloud and as the early dew that passeth away, as the dust that is driven with a whirlwind out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney.'†

"Better for them had they turned from the error of their ways, from the frenzy of their wickedness! Then, at least, the scourges of the Lord would have been profitable for them too. But the judgment of the Lord has fallen upon them, and we will sing the song of triumph: 'The idol of Bel is cast down, Dagon is broken, Sharon is covered with mire, and Libanus with confusion.'"

Such was the end of the wretched Julian. He

* Ps. xciii. 3, 5; Ps. lxxix. 7; Jer. Lament. iii, 45.

† Ps. lxxii. 19, 20; Osee, xiii. 3.

had set his hand to carry out a hundred plans, and not one had come to a happy end—the empire was not strengthened, nor the magistracy purified, nor studies bettered, nor the Court reformed, nor the Temple restored, nor paganism revived, nor the gods raised to their olden prominence; the Persians were still unconquered, the Roman name and glory lost, and he had not won the applause he sought from the nations of the earth; he left no lawful heir to hold his throne and preserve his name; not a glorious memory, not a tear of pity, nor a sigh of compassion attested his worth or proclaimed his loss. He had lived like an apostate; he died like one accursed. The world seemed to feel that it was rid of a public scourge, and breathed more freely. The monuments and temples which had already begun to rise in his honor remained unfinished, and looked more like dismal ruins than like public buildings; the costly tablets, with their adulatory inscriptions, and the statues designed to perpetuate his memory, were thrown, like worthless lumber, amid the dirt and rubbish; the College of Augurs was disbanded, the priestesses who had lived on the Court returned to their former occupations, even the philosophers, who had held their heads so high, now went to hide themselves in remote towns and country places, some of them, after putting off the philosopher's cloak and shaving their beards, came in humble guise to seek the favor of the hated Galileans. Many of the heathens, terrified at this manifestation of

God's sovereign power, acknowledged their defeat. "Tell us not," said one of them to the then youthful Jerome, "that the God of the Christians is long-suffering and merciful. Too swift, too implacable is His vengeance."

Christianity once more rose up victorious throughout the empire, crowned with peaceful majesty and triumph, defying without pride and without fear the power and the craft of future Julians. Antioch, more than any other city, had felt the weight of Julian's most fearful threats, and there it was natural that the joy and exultation at his defeat should find its loudest expression. The people thronged with joyful acclamations to the churches and the shrines of their martyrs, and while they greeted one another with shouts of joy and mutual congratulation, they chanted in gladness of heart canticles and hymns of praise to God, who had freed them from the tyrant's grasp and brought confusion upon those who had defied the power of God and of His Christ.

XXV.

FIFTY YEARS LATER.

TIGRANES, on his return from Alexandria, where we left him last, had been summoned to attend the emperor, who was setting out for his fatal campaign in Persia. As they halted at Carrhae, Tigranes obtained a short leave of absence, and hastened to the home of his betrothed. But instead of the joyful meeting which he anticipated, he found Thecla's parents in tears and mourning. Their child had suddenly been snatched away from them by the imperial officers, and they had no hope of ever seeing her again alive. It will be remembered that the Apostate spared no pains to win the favor of the gods for this expedition. He sought counsel especially from the oracle of Diana, at Carrhae, and the priests of the goddess required that a certain number of young virgins should be offered in sacrifice on her altar there. Among the victims seized and secretly conveyed to the temple of the idol, was the unhappy Thecla, who had been for some time kept hidden in one of the cells in which the intended human victims were confined. When Tigranes learned the place of her concealment, he resolved

at once to demand her release, trusting that Julian would not disregard the petitions of one who had been so faithful in his service. But when a man has once forsworn his God and the vows of his baptism, it is not to be expected that he will be scrupulous in his relations with men. Tigranes met the fate of those who have given their whole allegiance to earthly masters. So long as he was useful to the emperor he was flattered and caressed; but in his hour of need he was cast off, and the rewards of his devoted zeal and active service were insult, rejection and imprisonment.

The emperor met his petition with a harsh denial; and when Tigranes refused to take part in an idolatrous consecration and to swear by the false gods, he was seized by the emperor's orders and confined in the prison at Carrhae, to await his death sentence when Julian should return to celebrate his triumph with fresh sacrifices to the goddess of the moon.

Tigranes found time for thought in his solitary imprisonment. His experience taught him how vain are earthly dreams of glory, and how frail the support of princely favor. He learnt the lesson which so many have learnt from disappointment and misfortune, and offered himself wholly to God, asking only to die a Christian, if die he must, or to devote the rest of his life to the divine service, should his fate be other than he expected.

Meanwhile Thecla had discovered, through a Christian slave who attended her, that Tigranes

was in a prison near to her own. She contrived to communicate with him by means of the same faithful attendant; and with the connivance of the officer in charge of the temple, who was no friend of Julian or of the inhuman work over which he was forced to preside, the holy bishop Vitus was brought in, under cover of night, and Tigranes was regenerated in the saving waters of baptism. Thecla was amply consoled for all her sufferings by this happy consummation of so many hopes and prayers; both awaited with joyful submission to the divine will, the return of the emperor, and the sentence which should perpetuate in heaven the union they had contracted on earth in their betrothal. The imperial mandate came indeed, but it was the order for their release. At the death of Julian, the legions had proclaimed Jovian emperor. The first care of the new Cæsar, who had suffered for the faith at the hands of his apostate predecessor, was to issue an edict restoring the worship of the true God, and freeing all the Christians who were under sentence of exile or imprisonment. The same bishop Vitus, who had betrothed Tigranes and Thecla, was now called upon to complete their union. The marriage ceremony was celebrated with all the rites of the Church, in the presence of the happy parents and friends of Thecla, who had mourned for her as for one lost, and of the emperor Jovian, who would pay this mark of friendship to his old friend and companion in arms.

But Tigranes felt that in giving him her hand, Thecla was discharging a debt of gratitude to the preserver of her life; and he had learned from the letter which she had sent him during their imprisonment, that she had, from childhood, wished to devote herself entirely to God. The interior call which had come to himself, while in the dungeon at Carrhae, was still alive in his heart; and he felt that in this coincidence of desires and natural impulses, Providence was pointing out the course they were both to follow. He accordingly took occasion, when they returned from the church and were alone in the house of Thecla's parents, to open his mind and heart to his wife on the subject.

"Thecla," he asked, "do you remember the letter which was thrown into my cell at Carrhae?"

"When we were awaiting the sentence of death? Yes; I shall never forget those days."

"Do you remember that you spoke of a crown that is reserved in Heaven for the brides of Jesus Christ?"

"Why do you ask me such a question?" asked Thecla, fearing that Tigranes might suspect that she had wished to withdraw from the engagement made in their betrothal.

"Tell me," continued Tigranes, "did that bright crown draw your heart to the desire of being yourself a bride of Jesus Christ?"

"But why, Tigranes, do you ask me this?" persisted Thecla, with an anxious look.

"Do not be troubled," said Tigranes, affection-

ately, "I wish you to open your heart to me now, and to tell me, frankly, whether you did really desire to wear that crown?"

"To tell you the truth, then," answered Thecla, "from my early childhood my heart had been set upon wearing that crown; and to win it I should have been happy to die, either at Ctesiphon or at Carrhae. But when you saved my life and my honor, in Persia, I felt that a life-long debt of gratitude was put upon my conscience; I began to desire, above all things, to see you a Christian—for that I lived and prayed. That was the state of my feelings towards you; I say it freely, because you desire it. I declare, before God, who hears me, that I should have refused the hand of Augustus himself; but I did not feel at liberty to refuse yours, and I looked upon it as coming to me from God."

"And so, you preferred none to me, but only Jesus Christ?"

"None. I should be unworthy of you if it were otherwise."

"Well, said Tigranes, "I am happy to know this from yourself. And now, since you have opened your heart to me, I shall be as honest towards you. But first, tell me, do you still feel the same vocation?"

"Indeed," said Thecla, hesitatingly, "I cannot say; I know not what I should say. I cannot think of it now, for but a few moments ago I gave you my hand before God's holy altar, and swore to be faithful to you forever."

"But what if you knew that God has sent into my heart a longing to wear the same crown?"

"Tigranes!" cried Thecla, breathless with surprise and hope, "is it possible that the same desire burns in your own heart?"

"Thecla," said Tigranes, his face beaming with a heavenly light, "let us do a thing which will be beautiful in the sight of heaven. I know that many others have done, and still do it in Rome, in Alexandria, and the other Christian churches. Let us keep our plighted troth, and yet wear that crown of Christ's chosen spouses. And that one of us who reaches heaven first, will await and greet the other there. This place is consecrated by the memory of Jacob and Rachel, and we have been sanctified by the sacrament received to-day. I place in your hands that crown you have so ardently desired, and which I also long to wear. God alone is great; great is His kingdom and the love which time does not change. And now"—

"Tigranes," cried Thecla, "you have been to me as an angel sent from God. It is the Holy Ghost who speaks in you now; yes, I will be your bride forever. We will love each other on earth and in heaven, as angels love, as Valerian and Cecilia loved, forever, forever!"

That was truly a day of joy for Tigranes and Thecla, a day of deep and tranquil joy, a foretaste of heavenly joy, which is breathed by the Holy Spirit into great and generous hearts that have overcome the world; an unspeakable joy which

the world cannot know, nor imagine, nor believe —yet it is renewed and felt every day within the Church of God. Tigranes and Thecla understood it well, and enjoyed it all their lives long, and the last blessing of Vitus was realized: "Go in peace; I know that you will be happy."

* * * * * * * * *

Fifty years had passed away. Jovian Augustus had died, after a reign of a few months; other emperors had passed away amid glories, misfortunes, or crimes; the temple of Diana, at Carrhae, was in ruins, its priests dispersed; Rome herself, stricken by the wrath of God, was in the hands of her enemies. But the peaceful solitude of Ibora, the home of the virgins consecrated to God, founded and blest by the hand of the great Basil, still flourished, protected by its very loneliness, and by the neglect of men.

One autumn evening, towards the hour of sunset, an aged pilgrim knocked with his staff at the gate of the monastery. The portress who answered his call, bowed on beholding his bent and venerable form, and asked: "What do you seek, brother?"

"Hospitality for the night," replied the aged monk.

"Pardon, brother; the resting-place for travellers is yonder, beyond that little stream."

The old man looked towards the stream, and then towards the setting sun, and said feebly: "It is too late; I am old, and weak, and hungry, and

cannot walk further;" and he leaned against the gate to support his tottering frame. "Sister, give me but a morsel of bread and a cup of water, and let me rest here in the vestibule. You would not leave me exposed to the chilly night air?"

The portress bade the old man be seated until she could see the Superioress. She soon returned, bringing some bread and wine, of which the pilgrim partook slightly. Then turning to the portress he said:

"Sister, I feel that I have not many hours to live; ask the Superioress to come to me, for she must close my eyes."

The good sister, thinking that age and weariness were working on the mind of the old man, smiled at his words, but said kindly:

"The Superioress is occupied at present; but to-morrow morning you shall see her. Meanwhile rest in peace." And she pointed to a couch which had been placed in the vestibule during their conversation.

"Well," said the pilgrim, "To-morrow."

On the following morning, after the celebration of the Divine Office, an aged nun came to the door, leaning upon the arm of a younger sister: "Brother," said she kindly, "I am she whom these virgins call their mother. What can I do for you?"

"The old man turned his eyes slowly towards her, but seemed too weak to answer. The Superioress asked him again:

"Brother, whence do you come?"

"From very, very far," answered the pilgrim slowly, "to bid you farewell, and then to die."

These last words were uttered in a tone so weak and indistinct, that the Mother knelt beside the couch to catch what he might have to say. But the old man was silent for a moment, then making the sign of the cross upon his breast, and raising his dying eyes to heaven, he muttered in faltering accents: "The bridal-chamber of the Lamb—virgin's crown—a new canticle—with Jesus—Holy Mary—I await Thecla"—

"Tigranes!" exclaimed the aged nun with deep emotion, "Yes, I am Thecla! Angel sent to me from God! Await me there; I shall soon come!" She seized the hand of the old man and pressed it to her lips. It was cold in death; and Tigranes could not hear her words, unless from heaven. She closed his eyes, and with tears and prayers saw him lowered into the grave.

Tigranes had not long to wait; for a few days later, Thecla was resting beside him in the tomb.

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